

Orioles at Kickapoo July 21 (ML) suggested the species was more common than usual in the s. Hill Country. A fledgling Am. Goldfinch accompanying an adult in *Delta* July 29 confirmed nesting for this rare breeder in n. Texas (MW); another goldfinch July 18 provided a first July record for nearby *Van Zandt* (RK); and the species was seen at 2 sites in *Hemphill* June 5, an area of the Panhandle where they were found nesting in 1990 (KS).

Cited observers (subregional editors in boldface): Peggy Acord, Rich Armstrong, Eddie & Nina Arnold, Bob Behrstock, Peter Billingham, Lorrie Black, David Bradford, Marty Bray, Tim Brush, Barbara Bruns (BBr), Frank Bumgardner, Harold Burgess, Winnie Burkett, Oscar Carmona, Ross Dawkins, Gladys Donohue, John Economy, Mark Elwonger, Doug Emkalns, Mike Farmer, Bill Farnsworth, Steve Freed, Brush Freeman (BFr), John Gee, Brian Gibbons (BGi), Bill Graber, Gene Grimes, Karl Haller, George Harmon (GHa), Carl Haynie, J. C. Henderson, Gary Hodnee, Jenny Hoskins, P. D. Hulce, Joe Ideker, Greg Keiran, Richard Kinney, Greg Lasley, Mark Lockwood, **Gail Diane Luckner** (GDL) (East Texas: 13708 Bohemian Hall, Crosby, TX 77532), Guy Luneau (GLu), Debra McKee, Terry Maxwell, Brad McKinney, Joann & Don Merritt, Tony & Renee Messina, Ken Nanney, Bruce Neville, Julius Nussbaum, Brent Ortego, Nancy & **Paul Palmer** (South Texas: 615 South Wanda, Kingsville, TX 78363), Wyatt Partney (WPa), Jim Paton, Mike Patterson, Dick Payne, Dwight Peake (DPe), Tom Pincelli, Randy Pinkston, Barbara J. Porthast, Warren Pulich, **Ross Rasmussen** (North Central Texas: 600 S. Graves #1704, McKinney, TX 75069), Will Risser, Sara St. Slair, Paul Saraceni, Rosemary Scott, **Willie Sekula** (Central Texas: Rt. 1, Box 130, Falls City, TX 78113), Chuck Sexton, **Ken Seyffert** (Panhandle: 2206 S. Lipscomb, Amarillo, TX 79109), Cliff Shackelford (CSh), Clyde & Ruth Ann Smith, John Sproul, Rose Marie Stortz, Mary Beth Stowe, Glen Swartz, Delbert G. Tarter, Ed Wetzels, Egon & Sue Wiedenfeld, Matt White, Francis Williams, Ad York, **Barry Zimmer** (Trans-Pecos: 6720 Heartstone Ct., El Paso, TX 79924).

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Idaho/ Western Montana Region

DAN SVINGEN

This summer saw a return to the drought conditions that have plagued the region for four of the last five years. Fortunately, the dry weather allowed high nesting success. Waterfowl was the group most often mentioned as benefiting. Chuck Trost reports that Trumpeter Swan production was up in southeast Idaho. In northern Idaho, John Nigh found the highest duck nesting success in years, and Montana reporters described waterfowl reproduction as "good" to "fabulous!" Osprey and accipiter nest success was also high, based on the record number of Osprey banded on Idaho's Coeur d'Alene Lake, and the widespread reports of fledgling Cooper's Hawks and Northern Goshawks around St. Maries, Idaho. George Holton saw numerous second broods of American Robins, Cedar Waxwings, and Pine Siskins in the Helena, Montana area, suggesting that the conditions also benefited passerines. All of these sightings are in marked contrast to the summer of 1993, when the unseasonably cool, wet season greatly curtailed regional nesting success. It should be noted, however, that it was the wet weather last year that produced the thick vegetation this summer.

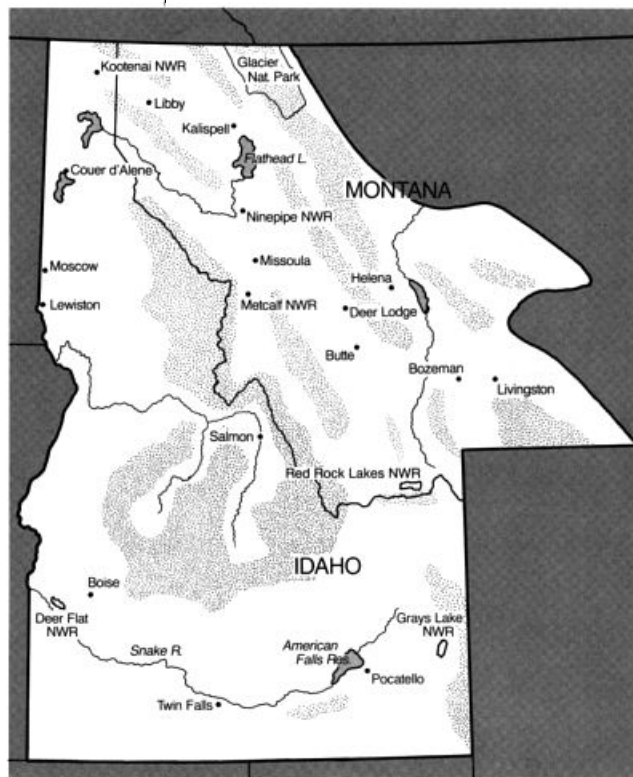
It is with affection and great respect that this column bids farewell to the editorial services of Tom Rogers. Tom has generously guided bird documentation in the Region for 40 years, and holds the distinction of being *Audubon Field Notes/American Birds'* longest-

term Regional Editor. Tom served as Editor for both the former Northern Rocky Mountain-Intermountain Region and the current Idaho/Western Montana Region. His energy, dedication, and insights have added greatly to our understanding of birdlife. We sincerely thank him for his efforts.

Loons to Shorebirds

An alternate-plumaged Com. Loon at Winchester Lake S. P., *Lewis*, ID June 28, was likely a summering non-breeder (WW). A Horned Grebe was at Mann Creek Res., *Washington*, ID July 7, where very rare in summer (JG). Unusual were four Am. White Pelicans at Mann L., *Nez Perce*, ID July 2-7 (KD, CV, WH) and 17 pelicans at Frenchtown, MT July 23 (DHo). A Double-crested Cormorant was at McArthur L., *Boundary*, ID, July 21, where a few are seen each year (PC). Cormorants are rare in e.c. Idaho, so singles in Salmon July 4 (HR) and 25 mi upstream from Riggins June 30 (DJ) were of interest.

The 15 Greater White-fronted Geese flying over Rattlesnake, MT June 18 were unseasonably late (DHo). A Harlequin Duck pair on the St. Joe R., *Shoshone*, ID included a female banded as a duckling there in 1988 (FC). Three Harlequins were photographed June 10 on the Lochsa R., *Idaho*, ID, where they are known to breed (M& MD), while two males were on the Salmon R., 85 mi e. of Riggins June 28 (DJ), where breeding has yet to be confirmed.





Three Harlequin Ducks on the Lochsa River, Idaho County, Idaho, June 10, 1994. Photograph/Merry Lynn Denny.

Wright reports that w. Montana Peregrine sightings are becoming too numerous to track, reflecting the impressive recovery of this species in other regions. A Ferruginous Hawk, locally very rare, was near Leadore, ID June 17 (HR). The Cooper's Hawk nest July 7 near Troy, ID provided the latilong's first confirmed breeding (KD). A Sora was at Williams L., Lemhi, ID June 4, where rare (HR). The status of southward-bound Semipalmated Sandpipers in n. Idaho has been variously described as rare to fairly common. The species was present at Mann's L., n. Idaho's most heavily birded shorebird habitat, July 7+, and numbered up to six among the 30–100 W. Sandpipers present (m.ob.). A slew of locally rare shorebirds spotted in e.c. Idaho included: one Solitary Sandpiper July 31 in Salmon; a Willet June 4 at Williams L., Lemhi; two Willets June 17 near Leadore; several Greater Yellowlegs July 10–31 in Salmon; and several Long-billed Dowitcher July 17–20 at Salmon (HR).

Owls to Pipits

The status of Flammulated Owl in Montana is becoming clearer due to systematic censusing. The species is much more common than previously thought, and is being found in a variety of localities and habitats in w. Montana (DHo). A Great Gray Owl nest 15 mi n.w. of Stanley, ID June 14 was a latilong first (LB). Three Short-eared Owls were present throughout the summer along Coeur d'Alene L., where rarely reported (BD). A locally rare Long-eared Owl was 25 mi s.e. of Salmon June 20 (HU). The Burrowing Owl 10 mi s.e. of Challis, ID, June 24, provided a latilong 2nd (JGr).

An imm. Bonaparte's Gull July 3 at Dry Lakes W.M.A. (†JG, BW) and an imm. Herring Gull at nearby Deer Flat N.W.R., Canyon, ID July 30 (JG), were rare summer sightings. Common Terns were absent this year from several traditional breeding areas

in s.e. Idaho after poor reproductive success last year (CT). Three Arctic Terns seen on American Falls Res., Power July 31 (CT) furnished Idaho's 8th record. All but one of these have been along the Snake R. corridor.

A Calliope Hummingbird banded near Troy, MT was in Colorado 3 weeks later (KB). A ♂ Broad-tailed Hummingbird visited a Coeur d'Alene, ID area feeder July 15–22, where the species is rare (*vide* SS, †), while another was at Deary, ID, July 22, where more expected (JJ). A Williamson's Sapsucker pair in Knox Canyon, Power, ID July 9 was suspected of providing a rare nesting record, but this could not be confirmed (CT). Nesting Gray Flycatchers in w. Owyhee, ID June 29 were the latilong's first confirmed breeders (†JG, TE, EH).

Past Eastern Phoebe sightings in Idaho have been considered hypothetical, so the well-described bird June 29 in w. Owyhee (†JG, EH, TE) may provide the first state and 2nd Regional record. The status of "Western" Flycatchers in n. Idaho needs clarification. It has generally been assumed that Cordilleran is the local breeder, but sev-

eral birders (DS, CT *et al.*) believe that some, if not most, are Pacific-slopes. Our Region now joins the confused ranks of "Western" Flycatcher observers in Washington, Oregon, and n. California.

An enterprising Am. Robin incorporated an abandoned chainsaw chain into its St. Maries nest (*vide* DS). A vagrant N. Mockingbird was near Malad City, ID June 9–30 (CT, BH). Another mocker was seen by L. Helena, MT July 24 to at least July 31 (JA, LA), and may have been the same bird seen in the general vicinity this spring. A flock of 100 Am. Pipits July 3 by Kuna, Ada, ID (MC, FK) was about 2 months early, raising questions as to their breeding grounds location and conditions.

Vireos to Finches

Regional observers were asked to track which of the Solitary Vireo subspecies they saw in their area. Although few sightings were noted, the original premise that *cassini* was the dominant breeder across the region seems correct. Both *plumbeus* and *cassini* were noted as breeders in s.w. Idaho, with



Nesting Gray Flycatchers in the nest in western Owyhee County, Idaho, June 29, 1994. First local confirmation of breeding. Photograph/John Gatchet.

plumbeus occupying the sage/pine/juniper communities and *cassini* the brushy, mountain slopes (MC). The geographical and ecological division between these 2 vireos requires further investigation, as does the status of *solitarius* during migration.

A ♂ Black-and-white Warbler June 13–30 20 mi s.e. of Salmon was Idaho's 13th, and the latilong's 2nd. Very rare throughout Idaho, a singing Ovenbird near Upper Priest L., Bonner June 12–30 furnished a latilong first (RR, DG).

Indigo Buntings were widespread in Montana this summer. A singing male in Helena June 1–18 provided a latilong first (m.ob.). Another ♂ Indigo at Hamilton June 26–July 4 was suspected of nesting (CB), but it was the ♂ Indigo and unidentified bunting female at the National Bison Range near Moise that took the honors of Montana's first confirmed breeding (EG).

A Brewer's Sparrow, rarely reported from n. Idaho, was seen near Deary July 22 (JJ). Several birders noted that Black-throated Sparrows were more common than usual in s.w. Idaho (MC, FK, m.ob.). Lincoln's Sparrow is rare in e.c. Idaho, so five–six 15 mi s.e. of Leadore were of interest (HR).

As reported last season, **Great-tailed Grackles** have arrived in s. Idaho. They were suspected of nesting this summer. Hammond found two near Burley June 18, in the same general area where one had been seen in May. Three were present there July 19 (JL). Another three birds were in Twin Falls July 23, 35 mi away (JL). There are now 7 Idaho records. At least 2 families of Com. Grackles, numbering 12 individuals, were in Salmon June 25, where rare and irregular (JG).

A Pine Grosbeak pair visited a Hayden L., ID feeder all summer (LS). The species normally summers at much higher elevations.

Observers cited (Subregional editors in boldface): Lynne Albright, Jon Andrews, Larry Barnes, Clif Barry, Kay Burk, Dan Casey, Frances Cassirer, Pat Cole, Mark Collie, Merry-Lynn & Mike Denny (M&MD), Kas Dumroese, Barbara Durrell, Terry Edwards, John Gatchet (JG), Dale Goble, Ericke Greene, Jerry Gregson (JGr), Evelyn Hainey, Brad Hammond, Winnie Hepburn, Dave Holick (DH), Denver Holt (DHo), **George Holton**, Jan Johnson, **Dean Jones**, **Merlene Koliner**, Florence Knoll, Jason Lynch, John Nigh, **Hadley Roberts**, Russ Roundy, Lee Streitz, **Shirley Sturts**, Dan Svingen, **Charles Trost**, Helen Ulmschneider, Wayne Weber, Bob Willison, **Philip Wright**, Carol Vande Voorde.

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Mountain West Region

HUGH E. KINGERY

The summer featured Wyoming's first Marbled Murrelet, Colorado's second Red-faced Warbler, two new Colorado breeding species—Northern Waterthrush and Hooded Warbler, and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher which fledged three young in Colorado, 400 miles north of its normal range, with a Western Kingbird as a mate.

Drought and forest fires contributed to an unusual summer for bird watchers; the effects on birds remains problematic. Las Vegas had eight consecutive days over 120° F. Southern Utah had 45 days of temperatures over 100° F. Rainfall throughout the Region dipped way below average. Several observers noted a decline in insect-eating birds. The drought most dramatically affected hummingbirds: They thronged feeders all over the Mountain West, perhaps due to a drought-induced food shortages.

Colorado recorded 1697 fires which burned 49,518 acres. The tragedy of forest fires touches human lives closely; individual wildlife suffers, but as a whole fires have a natural effect on the landscape and its wildlife.

We welcome touring birders in the Mountain West; you often find birds we also would like to see. If you find a rarity, please call a local observer (this report mentions many of them), the state Rare Bird Alert, or the Regional Editor.

Abbreviations: D.F.O. (*Denver Field Ornithologists field trips, compiled by Phil Hayes*); L.L.B.L. (*Longmont/Lyons/Berthoud/Loveland area, CO, using Foothills Audubon Club records*); R.E. (*Regional Editor*); S.S.G.S.L. (*South shore, Great Salt Lake*); 1st Lat (*first latilong record [a latilong is outlined by one degree each of latitude and longitude, and measures about 50 by 70 mi]*); ‡ (*written description on file with, and subject to approval of, state or local records committee*); # (*no written description submitted or photograph not seen by R.E.*).

Loons to Ibises

A well-described Pacific Loon, an extraordinary summer tourist, stayed at least a week at Saratoga, WY June 19–25 (†RLS, AMa). Another extraordinary tourist, a Red-necked Grebe, reportedly stayed July 23–25 at Lahontan Valley, NV (#LN, #DT, #ph.). Lahontan Valley had 68 nesting pairs of Eared Grebes. At Cody, WY, wind blew away the first nesting attempt by Eareds, but there were 18 nests in July, and on July 22 males still brought nest material to sitting females (UK). Four pairs nested s.w. of Grand Jct., CO at Unaweep Seep (RL). Only a few of Lahontan Valley's W. Grebes produced young. Cody's fared better—16 adults carried young on their backs July 22 (UK). Flocks

