

Tanagers to Crossbills

In Las Vegas one Summer Tanager stopped June 8 and two tarried July 16; Lida and Dyer, NV each had one July 31 (J&MC). Blue Grosbeaks have expanded their range in Utah. Once restricted to s. and e. Utah, reports came from 5 locations this season, from Bear R. to Provo (CK). At Ogden, Killpack banded dramatically fewer Lazuli Buntings than usual—20 *cf.* 160 in 1993. As a seed-eaters Lazulis should not suffer from a drought-induced insect shortage, although like many seed-eaters they probably feed insects to their nestlings. The Painted Bunting which arrived May 28 maintained a territory in Cottonwood Canyon, *Baca*, CO through at least June 12 (m.ob.).

SA Not generally recognized as numerous in e. Colorado, Dickcissels by the dozen sang in dozens of Atlas blocks this summer. Atlasers reported 5–27 in Atlas blocks from the Arkansas Valley (Granada and McClave) to the South Platte R. in (Julesburg). Dickcissels arrive late to nest in a part of Colorado which birders disdain in June and July. The birds favor weedy fields and, recently, Conservation Reserve Program lands. These birds may comprise an important component of the Dickcissel breeding population. On the other hand, they may have had a particularly prosperous year, since the three singing males June 23 and one female carrying food near Romeo, CO, July 15 provided both first observations and first confirmed breeding in the San Luis Valley (HEK, UCK).

The Canyon Towhee perched on a lava outcrop near Antonito, CO June 23 provided another first for the San Luis Valley (HEK, UCK). Chipping and Fox sparrows both nested from valley to timberline in *Eagle*. Three ♂ Chippings sang at the edge of the tundra at 11,600 feet and Foxes occurred up to 10,100 (JM). Observers found Bobolinks in 3 Utah sites (Brigham City, Morgan, and Kaysville), at Farson and Story, WY, and at Ft. Collins, Logan, and Steamboat Springs, CO (1st Lat breeding, DH). Common Grackles nested at Cody and Eagle. Denver Field Ornithologist field trips counted more than ever (261 *cf.* 86–210), while L.L.B.L. had substantially fewer than last year (262 *cf.* 1311). Red Crossbills cruised abundantly through the San Juan Mts. of s.w. Colorado and in the Colorado Front Range. After one devastating forest fire at Pingree Park w. of Ft. Collins, 10 crossbills fed on newly available lodgepole pine seeds (cones from this pine open up after a fire to spread seeds) and on pieces of drywall

from burned lodges, perhaps as a calcium source (WL). A White-winged Crossbill visited Evergreen July 22 (BM) and a point count found one on the Rio Grande N.F. in s. Colorado (C.B.O.).

Undocumented Rarities

This reports omits 14 rarities reported without details or supporting documentation, at least one from each state.

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Southwest Region: Arizona

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Abbreviations: A.B.C. (*Arizona Bird Committee*); L.C.R.V. (*Lower Colorado R. Valley*), G.F.P. (*Gila Farms Pond*); M.F.L. (*Many Farms Lake*); P.A.P. (*Pinal Air Park*); P.R.D. (*Painted Rock Dam*); S.P.R. (*San Pedro R.*), S.T.P. (*Sewage Treatment Plant*); S.W.R.S. (*Southwestern Research Station*).

Grebes to Ducks

After successfully nesting at Willcox the past 2 summers, only two Eared Grebes were found summering there this year, and no nest was found (RH). Another bird in pre-basic molt at G.F.P., July 1 (DKa) was likely an early migrant. After being suspected of nesting at Mormon L. in 1993, W Grebes were confirmed nesting there this year, with at least 10 pairs with young present by the end of the period (VG *et al.*), M.F.L. and P.R.D. are the only other localities away from the L.C.R.V. that this species has been found nesting in Arizona. The Clark's Grebe found at Willcox in late May remained until at least June 2 (GM). Another single individual was seen at P.R.D., July 9 (J. Burns) and may have been the same bird there during the early spring Nesting of Clark's Grebe at M.F.L. was finally confirmed with a pair and young reported June 9 (TC, RK).

Eleven Am. White Pelicans were found at Picacho Res., June 11 (J. McGehee, M Pruss); in the past, this species has been known to summer locally in small numbers at localities such as P.R.D. and the L.C.R.V. The Brown Pelican present at P.R.D. since at least winter was joined by a 2nd individual July 2 (m.ob.); both remained there through the period. Another Brown Pelican was found in Chandler June 3 (SGa), an early date, and remained through the period. One at a nearby pond July 3 (SGa) may have been the same individual. The Neotropic Cormorant at P.R.D. in May was present throughout the summer (m.ob.). The only report of Magnificent Frigatebird was of a juvenile circling briefly over P.R.D. at dawn July 9 before disappearing to the northeast (DKa).

Our current understanding of Least Bittern breeding distribution away from the L.C.R.V. in s. Arizona is that they are known along the Salt and Gila Rivers s.w. of Phoenix, and Picacho Res. This summer distribution was confirmed, with no fewer than 12 individuals along the Salt and Gila Rivers (D. Todd), and 20–30 at Picacho Res., June 11 (J. McGehee, M. Pruss). Two nests of Great Blue Herons were found at Horseshoe L., Fort Apache Indian Reservation, June 10 (GM), establishing a new nesting locality for this species in Arizona. Cattle Egrets are a regular summer visitor to s. Arizona, but have only recently been found nesting at Yuma; therefore, a small group found nesting along the Gila R. near Ocotillo July 1 (SG) was of interest. A group of 21 Cattle Egrets in breeding plumage in s.w. Phoenix July 2 (JWi) suggested that this species might be nesting locally. One ad. Black-crowned Night-Heron along the upper S.P.R., June 15, and a juvenile there July 7 (JWh) suggest that it may have bred locally; this species is not known to nest in this portion of the state. An ad. White-faced Ibis at M.F.L., June 9 (TC) was described as being in “appropriate breeding habitat; there is no confirmed nesting record from Arizona. A casual summer visitor to s. Arizona, a single Wood Stork was at P.R.D., July 9–20 (DKa, m.ob.).

At least 10 pairs of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were present at the Gilbert S.T.P. throughout the period, with 2 pairs successfully nesting and producing 26 young (SGa). Two Black-bellieds were reported from P.R.D., July 24 (DE *et al.*); this is farther west than this species’ normal distribution in the state. A pair of Canada Geese that bred at Luna L. near Alpine (G. Beatty) was most likely a remnant of resident introduced birds in the Alpine area. “Mexican” type Mallards had a particularly good breeding season on the upper S.P.R., with ≥ 40 individuals along the river July 7 (JWh). A single δ Blue-winged Teal at Willcox July 2 (RH) was likely a very early fall migrant. Very unusual was an Am. Wigeon present at Willcox June 24+ (RH, A. Swain). Very early were two Am. Wigeons at Kino Springs near Nogales July 15 (CDB, B. Benesh), with at least one remaining through the end of the period (GHR). Two pairs of Canvasbacks seen in “nuptial flight” were at Sunrise L., White Mts., June 11 (J. Levy), while another, or the same, pair was observed at nearby White Mt. Res., June 25 (TC); there is no confirmed nesting record of this species in Arizona. Two δ and anywhere from one–three f Redheads were seen along the Gila R. near Arlington June 2 (B. Demaree, JWi). Single f Buffleheads were located at Becker L. in Springerville June 26 (TC) and at G.F.P. July 1 (DKa); this species is casual at best as a mid-summer visitor.

SA A melanistic δ Ruddy Duck first found at Willcox by Hoyer June 24 and subsequently viewed by numerous observers brought to our attention a potential identification pitfall. The bird was structurally identical to adjacent δ Ruddy Ducks. The plumage was reminiscent of a δ Ruddy Duck masked over with black pigmentation, with a virtually all-black head (excepting a small white sub-loral spot on each side of the face); a bluish-gray bill; dark, blackish-brown plumage with blackish barring on the breast and underparts; blackish tips to the white undertail coverts; entirely dark upperwing; and whitish median underwing coverts. The combination of a black head, bluish bill, and stiff-tailed appearance led several observers to identify this duck as a δ Masked Duck, despite numerous inconsistencies—including a mostly black head (truly a “masked” effect on Masked), unpatterned upperparts (always somewhat patterned in Masked), barred breast and flanks (always plain or spotted in Masked), and, perhaps most importantly, the lack of prominent white in the greater upperwing coverts and outer webs of the secondaries (†CDB). To our knowledge, there are no known occurrences of this species w. of the Rio Grande Valley in s. Texas.

Raptors to Terns

Osprey is a very sparse nesting species anywhere in Arizona, particularly below the Mogollon Rim. Therefore, a pair with 2 nestlings at Lynx L. e. of Prescott July 12 (U.S. Forest Service) was notable. Addi-

tionally, 2 individuals at P.R.D., July 9 (J. Burns) suggested the possibility of local nesting. At least 11 White-tailed Kites were reported around s. Arizona, with 2 nests found; a pair with nest was found at Cook’s L., S.P.R. (R. Meyer, DTr), and another nest was located at P.A.P. pecan grove June 18 (TC, DTr, m.ob.), where a pair has been present for several years. Yet another pair of kites was again along the Gila R. at Robbin’s Butte, where a nest of this species was located in 1993. Representing a new nesting locality, 2 nests of Mississippi Kites were located along the S.P.R. near Casabel (JWh). This discovery suggests a southward expansion of this species along the S.P.R. from its closest known nesting site at San Manuel. A f N. Harrier was found in suitable nesting habitat s.w. of Fredonia June 6 (TC, RK); since the mid-1970s, there have been about a dozen June records, several of which included pairs in suitable breeding habitat, yet only once was a nest discovered. The only other nesting attempt since the late 1800s, when this species nested regularly in n.e. Arizona, was one discovered near Vicksburg Apr. 23, 1980.

A calling imm. *Accipiter*, identified as a Sharp-shinned Hawk, in Cave Cr., Santa Rita Mts., July 31–Aug. 5 was within 1.5 mi of where a pair of ad. Sharp-shinned Hawks were seen Aug. 1 & 4 (†RH); there are very few reports of nesting Sharp-shinned s. of the mountains in c. Arizona. A single Com. Black-Hawk was in Cave Cr. Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., June 12 (DJa), where this species is not known to nest. Although extralimital Harris’s Hawk records are always suspect due to their frequency as a falconer’s bird, one was reported 12 mi w. of Flagstaff July 12 (D. Payne), representing a first local record. Gray Hawks had a particularly successful nesting



season along the upper S.P.R., with at least 20 nests found, and most nests fledging 2 young (JWh, DK). Two individual Swainson's Hawks July 16, one at Gila Bend and the other at Paloma (DKa), were away from known nesting areas, and too early for south-bound migrants. An ad. Zone-tailed Hawk at Grandview Pt., Grand Canyon N.P., June 5 (B. Brown) provided only the 3rd record of this species for the Grand Canyon region. Another bedraggled imm. bird was present at the P.A.P. pecan grove June 11+; this individual may have been the immature that spent most of the winter in the grove, and had subsequently completed a pre-basic molt.

A survey for rails conducted by D. Todd of Arizona Game and Fish during May, June, and July found nine Black Rails at Mittry L. Wildlife Area, L.C.R.V., as well as 84 Clapper Rails along the L.C.R.V. Remarkably, an additional 55 Clapper Rails were located along the Gila R. between Phoenix and Gila Bend. Several pairs of Virginia Rails were present along Cienega Cr. during the period (JWh), confirming the likelihood that this species nests there.

The only report of Snowy Plover was of a single individual at Gila Bend S.T.P., July 16 (DKa); this species occasionally nests in s. Arizona when water conditions are favorable. Four Mt. Plovers were seen in suitable breeding habitat n.w. of Springerville June 30–July 1 (T. McCarthey); while there is still no confirmed nesting of this species in the state, intensive searching of the Springerville area will likely result in confirmation. Fifteen pairs of Am. Avocets found breeding at M.F.L., June 9 (TC) established only the 3rd breeding location for this species in n. Arizona. No fewer than 32 ad. avocets were counted at Gilbert S.T.P., June 29 (SGa), with young present July 13+; this brood represented the 2nd successful breeding at this locality this year, the first occurring in April.

A very early Solitary Sandpiper was at Arivaca Cienega June 22 (DKa), representing what may be the earliest fall record for the state. After last year's successful nesting, a pair of Long-billed Curlews was again found in the Eagar area May 22 (J. Muth). An ad. Semipalmated Sandpiper was found at Willcox July 3 (MS), eclipsing the earliest fall record by a week. Another adult in pre-basic molt, as well as a juvenile, were also at Willcox July 31 (CDB, JBo, SGa). A Least Sandpiper at Willcox June 24 (RH) provided one of the earliest fall records. Equally early was a Baird's Sandpiper at Willcox July 2 (RH); there are only 2 earlier fall records in the state, both in late June. The only report for Short-billed Dowitcher was of an adult at Willcox July 16 (J. Dunn). The presence of five ♀ and four ♂ Wilson's Phalaropes in a wet field in Eagar June 25–26 (*vide* TC), absent a few days later,

suggested early fall migrants and not breeding individuals.

The ad. California Gull present at P.R.D. at the end of the spring period remained through the summer (m.ob.). A very early ad. Black Tern was at G.F.P., July 1 (DKa).

Pigeons to Woodpeckers

After the large fire at high elevations in the Chiricahua Mts., more than 200 Band-tailed Pigeons were seen at an unusually low elevation around Portal July 15 (DJa *et al.*). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was found dead in Ponderosa Pine forest near Flagstaff June 9 (T. Merkel, *NAU); this was one of few n. Arizona records away from nesting areas in the extreme n.w. and the upper Little Colorado R., and at an unusually high elevation. Another Yellow-billed Cuckoo was hit by a car w. of Kayenta June 4 (CL). Still considered a casual visitor to s. Arizona, a Groove-billed Ani was reported from Sells June 22–23 (A. Moorehouse). The Barn Owl is a very local breeder in n. Arizona, therefore a pair flushed from under an abandoned bridge s.w. of Fredonia June 7 (TC, RK), and another flushed out of a tamarisk tree at M.F.L., June 9 (TC, RK), were of interest.

Other than the two White-eared Hummingbirds present throughout the period at Ramsey Canyon, a male and a female were observed at Comfort Spring, Carr Canyon July 7 (GHR, RH). A ♂ Berylline Hummingbird was observed at Spofford's feeders in Portal June 18–21 (SSp), while another male frequented a feeder at a campground in Cave Cr. Canyon June 25 (JBo). A ♀ Berylline was present in Paradise June 21–28 (*vide* DJa); there are now about 35 records of this "Mexican" hummingbird. Violet-crowned Hummingbirds reported away from expected areas included one at Sabino Canyon June 4 (TC, RK), and another along the upper S.P.R., July 8 (B. Taber, B. Akers). Lucifer Hummingbird records were more widespread than usual. Other than the usual scattering of individuals in the Portal area, two were frequenting a feeder in Sonoita during most of July (J. Church), a female was seen at Coronado Ntl. Memorial June 25 (CDB, R. Roche, R. Moore)—having been reported earlier by a staff member, and another female was observed away from feeders at Comfort Spring July 7 (GHR, L, Terrill). Male and ♀ Anna's Hummingbirds were in Prescott June 18 (A. Contreras, J. Vickery), where this species is seldom reported. A Costa's Hummingbird was in Portal June 7–9 (M. Willy); the accumulation of records in recent years from this locality and Guadalupe Canyon indicates that this species is a rare, but regular, visitor to extreme s.e. Arizona. A Broad-tailed Hummingbird seen at St. David June 21 (DK)

was one of very few reported in June away from the mountains in s.e. Arizona.

A pair of Elegant Trogons nested in lower Ramsey Canyon for the first time in nearly 20 years (*vide* S. Williamson). A second male was seen sporadically farther up the canyon throughout the period (m.ob.). At least one ♂ Eared Trogon, possibly from the pair that has frequented the canyon since August 1991, was seen and heard sporadically throughout the period (m.ob.). Intriguing was a report (without details) of another pair of Eared Trogons investigating a tree cavity in the Rustler-Barfoot Park area, Chiricahua Mts., June 9–11 (*vide* DJa). Unfortunately, this area was completely destroyed in the "Rattlesnake" fire, and the birds were never relocated. It has become apparent in recent years that Belted Kingfisher is a local and irregular summer resident, and sometimes breeder, along permanent watercourses on or just below the Mogollon Rim. One was along the W. Fork of the Little Colorado R., June 17 (*vide* TC), a pair was along the W. Fork of the Black R., June 29 (D. Aubuchon), another pair was in Leonard Canyon on the Mogollon Rim n.e. of Payson July 13 (*vide* TC), another single bird was along the Black R. n.w. of Hannagan Meadow July 19 (*vide* TC), and, finally, another pair was at a very low elevation along the Agua Fria R. upstream from L. Pleasant July 26 (T. Hughes). Of local interest was a pair of Red-naped Sapsuckers nesting on Black Mesa; a female was seen entering a nest cavity June 2–8 (CL).

Flycatchers to Thrashers

A survey by Arizona Game and Fish found an encouraging number of territorial Willow Flycatchers during the summer. At least 92 territories and 50 nests were found statewide, this species is still considered extremely threatened in the Southwest (*vide* TC, S. Sferra). The Buff-breasted Flycatcher located in Rucker Canyon, Chiricahua Mts., during May was seen again June 4–5 (RH); this species is most likely a rare and local breeder in the Chiricahua Mts. A pair of Tropical Kingbirds were reported along the Gila R. e. of Yuma June 19 (J. Taylor); this locality is far to the w. of this species' usual breeding range in s. Arizona, but it is unclear whether a nest was located. Thick-billed Kingbirds were found away from normal breeding areas; one found in Portal during May remained there until mid-June (DJa), another pair was seen sporadically at S.W.-R.S. through the period (DJa), and yet another pair was found nesting at Aliso Springs, Tumacacori Mts., June 7 (LV). An E. Kingbird at P.A.P. pecan grove July 19 (CDB, B. Benesh) provided an odd midsummer record. Remarkably, a pair of Scissor-tailed Flycatchers was located along Watermelon

Rd. w. of Gila Bend July 9+ (DKa *et al.*); this is only the 2nd occurrence of a pair during what might be construed the breeding season, unfortunately, no nest was found.

At least one Tree Swallow was observed at Horseshoe L., White Mts., June 10 (GM); this is very late for a spring migrant and might represent a new nesting locality. Another new nesting locality was confirmed when adults were seen feeding young in the Chuska Mts., July 10 (CL). A single Mt. Chickadee at Florida Saddle, Santa Rita Mts., June 14 (RH), at the same locality as one in the spring, and the subsequent report of "several" at this location later suggest that there might be a small, recently established breeding population in the Santa Rita Mts. A singing Winter Wren was reported from the W. Fork of Oak Cr., June 25 (†F&L Brandt); this species has yet to be adequately documented from this locality during summer. A single Am. Dipper was seen at an unusually low elevation along Tonto Cr. near Gisela July 24 (R. Dummer).

A pair of Swainson's Thrushes, along with a nest and eggs, was located along the Little Colorado R. near Greer June 6 (T. McCarty); although singing males have been observed in the White Mts. region in past years, this may represent the first confirmed nesting record there. More unusual was the presence of at least six individual Swainson's in the Chuska Mts., where this species was previously unrecorded during the breeding season. A pair with a nest was located June 11 (CL), and additional nests were found on subsequent visits to this remote range. A Gray Catbird at M.F.L., June 9 (TC, RK) was likely a late spring migrant. Very odd for midsummer was the report of a Brown Thrasher at Cordes Jct., July 13 (B. Taber).

Warblers to Orioles

Single N. Parulas were reported at Betty's Kitchen, n. of Yuma, in early June (*vide* SGa) and along S. Fork, Cave Cr. Canyon June 10 (DJa). An Ovenbird in Scottsdale June 7 (A. McGowan) provided the first June record for *Maricopa*. After a phenomenal spring for N. Waterthrush (23 records), a late migrant was along the upper S.P.R. June 3 (D. Fischer). Two–four pairs of MacGillivray's Warblers n. w. of Heliograph Peak, Pinaleno Mts., June 7–July 3 (RH) probably represent a new southerly breeding locale for Arizona. Another two singing males and a female along Chevon Cr., n.e. of Payson, June 30 (DS, JC) provided only the 2nd summer record from the Mogollon Rim region, and may represent a new nesting locality. A very late Wilson's Warbler was in Portal June 13 (DJa).

For the 3rd consecutive year, **Flame-colored Tanager** was seen in Ramsey Canyon; this year's sighting was a very dull female-plum-

aged individual July 7 (†GHR, KK). Observers should be aware that there are still fewer than 10 United States records of this stray from Mexico. A ♀ **Yellow Grosbeak** at the Patagonia "roadside rest" June 18–21 (RJo, †RH, †G. McCaskie, m.ob.) provided about a 12th or 13th record. Two other single observer sightings of this species, one near Parker Canyon L., July 18 (M. Shafer, *vide* RH), and another in upper Ramsey Canyon July 27 (†D. Ecker), await review by the A.B.C. Several Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, first found in May in Cave Cr. Canyon, lingered into mid-June, including one ad. male paired with a ♀ Black-headed Grosbeak; the pair failed to produce viable young (DJa). Additional Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were found in Scottsdale June 2 (A. McGowan) and at Portal June 24 (RH, JBo).

A bit n.e. of its normal breeding range in Arizona, a Botteri's Sparrow was present below Portal throughout the period (DJa). A pair of Lincoln's Sparrow found in the Chuska Mts. in late June (CL) probably indicate a new nesting locality. A ♂ Bobolink was in Eagar June 23 (T. Meyers, B. Palmer); this is the first midsummer record from the Springerville area since this species nested there during June and July 1979. A Com. Grackle was reported from Kayenta June 10 (†TC, CL); this record awaits review by the A.B.C. For the 2nd consecutive year, **Streak-backed Orioles** nested successfully on the lower S.P.R. near Dudleyville (details will be published separately). This year a sub-ad. male was seen helping at the nest of the 2 ad. birds, and a fledgling was seen July 24 (TC, GM *et al.*). Remarkably, another pair attempted nesting twice near the P.A.P. pecan grove June 9–July 13, but both attempts ended in the nest being blown down (GHe, ph. MS).

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New Mexico

SARTOR O. WILLIAMS III

The summer began drier and warmer than usual, especially in the southern tier of counties, and wildfires were widespread. But June rains in the eastern plains and scattered rains elsewhere by mid-July helped to restore at least some semblance of normalcy.

Abbreviations: Bitter L. (*Bitter Lake Nat'l Wildlife Refuge*); Bosque (*Bosque del Apache Nat'l Wildlife Refuge*); E.B.L. (*Elephant Butte Lake*); L.V.N.W.R. (*Las Vegas N.W.R.*); R.G.V. (*Rio Grande Valley*); Zuni (*Zuni Indian Reservation*). Guadalupe, Skeleton, and Post Office canyons refer to those portions in Hidalgo, New Mexico.

Grebes to Ducks

Eared Grebes made a good showing at Stinking (Burford) L., with 1200 active nests in 2 colonies June 11 (DS), and at Zuni, where there were over 200 nests at 2 locations (DC). Alert observers identified both Western and Clark's grebes summering together on several lakes, including at Morgan L., Springer L., and E.B.L. (v.o.); three Westerns were at Zuni July 9 (ph. DC), while a Western at Laguna Grande, *Eddy*, June 11 (SW) was a local first. Three Neotropical Cormorants were far north near Belen June 5 (WH); 6–8 Neotropical nests were in a newly discovered Bosque colony July 12 (DL, WH). Also discovered nesting at Bosque in July were about 50 pairs of Snowy Egrets, 10 pairs of Cattle Egrets, 2–6 pairs of Great Egrets, and 75 pairs of Black-crowned Night-Herons (DL). In the southeast, Snowies, Cattles, and Black-crowns were nesting at the Artesia colony July 4 (ML), but the traditional Laguna Grande colony was abandoned, although 15–20 pairs of Black-crowns were discovered at a previously undetected site nearby (SW). Rarer herons were one–four Little Blues in the middle R.G.V., June 26–July 17 (v.o., ph. DC) and a **Tricolored Heron** at Bitter L., June 10–13 (SB *et al.*). New Mexico's third well-documented **Reddish Egret** was seen by many at Bitter L. from July 15–August (SN *et al.*). Another surprise was the year's 2nd **White Ibis**, an adult feeding with 13 White-faced at Maxwell N.W.R., July 24 (LS). Bosque became New Mexico's 4th known White-faced Ibis breeding locale when four–six adults and 2 nests with eggs were located July 18 (DL); at Stinking L., 28 White-faced nests produced 30 young by June 28 (DS). Small numbers of Redheads