

# Oregon/ Washington Region

## BILL TWEIT AND JIM JOHNSON

June and July rainfall were near normal, and July temperatures were slightly above average. A strong storm system passed through July 8–9 causing a lot of damage east of the Cascades in Oregon. It appeared a number of bird nests and young were destroyed, reported Nehls.

Even though the El Niño/Southern Oscillation (ENSO) event in the southern hemisphere has concluded, the continental shelf waters of our Region continue to be relatively inhospitable. Seabird breeding numbers on the Washington coast were apparently low again this year (*vide* TW), and murrens had another disastrous breeding season off Oregon (*vide* HN). Pelagic trip counts of Sooty Shearwater, Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel, and Cassin's Auklet were particularly disappointing. Onshore, observers recorded high percentages of hatching year

(HY) Brown Pelican and Heermann's Gull, which are generally indications of ENSO conditions. However, Elegant Terns seem to be the most consistent indicator of ENSO conditions, and none appeared. Perhaps related to these disturbances was the Caspian Tern colony failure in Grays Harbor. Unfortunately it coincided with the failure of the Everett colony, due to human disturbance.

Abbreviations: Fields (*Fields, Harney Co., OR*); Malheur (*Malheur N.W.R., Harney Co., OR*); O.S. (*Ocean Shores, Grays Harbor Co., WA*); S.J.C.R. (*south jetty of the Columbia R., Clatsop Co., OR*).

## Loons to Ducks

One of Washington's few pairs of breeding Com. Loon, near Lester, *King*, failed this summer due to predation (EH). Unusual non-breeding Red-necked Grebe reports came from several locations: >three on the Oregon coast in *Lincoln* (m.ob., *vide* RB), two on Eld Inlet, *Thurston*, WA (B. Estes), and 15 at Gibson Spit, *Clallam*, WA July 21 (BN). At least one pair bred on Sullivan L., *Pend Oreille*, WA, with three young noted July 22 (RW); they breed at few locations in the Region. Western Grebe summering numbers on Bellingham Bay, WA appear to be on a declining trend (TW). In e. Oregon, where they breed in relatively few locales, 12 pair were present with some displaying at Beulah Res., *Malheur*, June 15 (AC). One Clark's Grebe was at Diamond L., *Douglas*, OR July 28 (DM), w. of the known breeding range, and birds at Bully Creek Res., *Malheur*, OR June 16 (AC) and Thief Valley Res., *Union*, OR June 16 (PaSu) were closer to known colonies but may have been non-breeders.

Large numbers of N. Fulmar appeared at the end of July off Westport, WA: >900 July 29, while only 14 were found July 16 (TW). For the 3rd consecutive summer, Sooty Shearwater numbers were low; the July pelagic trips off Westport produced counts of 1150 and 650 (TW). Eleven Fork-tailed Storm-Petrels seen from the Port Angeles-Victoria Ferry, *Clallam*, WA July 7 (PL) were an indication that their feeding activity continues to be displaced into inland waters. The pelagic trip counts of four and 51 off Westport were correspondingly low (TW). Over 80% of the Brown Pelicans in July at Grays Harbor, WA were

first-year birds (TW), a very high percentage. Apparently their later than normal post-breeding dispersal (*see Spring report*) was not due to lack of breeding success.

A count of >10,000 Double-crested Cormorants on Sand I. in the Columbia R. estuary July 11 (D. Fix) is indicative of their current abundance on the coast. Single Cattle Egrets in Naselle, *Pacific* (A. Richards), and in full breeding plumage at Fishtown, *Skagit*, July 20 (B. Anderson) furnished exceedingly rare summer reports for Washington. Black-crowned Night-Herons are rare visitors to the westside: An immature was at S.J.C.R., June 29 (MP) and an adult was at Ridgefield N.W.R., *Clark*, WA June 20 (C. Thomas, E. Sproul). Five White-faced Ibis at Atkins L., *Douglas*, WA June 3 (D. Stephens) were the only reports away from their breeding areas.

An imm. Trumpeter Swan summered at Eckman L., *Lincoln*, June 6+ (D. Faxon, R. Lowe, m.ob.), very unusual on the Oregon coast. A Mute Swan appeared at S.J.C.R., June 29 (MP), destination unknown. They continue to reproduce successfully at Seattle; three young were noted June 30 (MS). Two successful nests of N. Shoveler at Mollala, *Clackamas*, June 16 and July 3 (ES, TJ) provided possibly the first confirming evidence of breeding w. of the Cascades in Oregon. American Wigeon are rare breeders throughout the Region; broods were observed at Molson, *Okanogan*, WA July 13 (PL) and at Monument, *Grant*, OR July 4 (AC). Lesser Scaup breeding records came from 2 usual Puget Sound locations: Deer Lagoon, *Island*, July 2 (SMI) and Everett, *Snohomish*, July 25 (SMI). In the Oregon Cascades, >four Harlequin Duck broods were produced in the upper Molalla Basin, *Clackamas*, and >nine broods were above Green Peter Res., *Linn* (SDo). They are very rare in the Oregon Coast Range, so a brood seen on the Nestucca R., *Tillamook*, in July where a hen with brood was seen in July of 1994 was exciting (*vide* SDo). There were 4 breeding records of Com. Goldeneye, a very rare breeder, from n. Washington: on Big Meadow L., *Pend Oreille*, June 9 (AS); on the Pend Oreille R. at Usk, *Pend Oreille*, June 11 (AS); and 2 broods at Oroville, *Okanogan*, June 6 (PtSu). Bufflehead are also rare breeders in the Region; they bred at Big Meadow L., *Pend Oreille*, WA (AS), and a male at Bully Creek Res., *Malheur*, OR June 16 (AC) was in appropriate breeding habitat.

## Osprey to Phalaropes

Osprey bred at Pasco, *Franklin*, WA (RW); although they are common breeders elsewhere in the Region, they are generally unusual in the lower Columbia Basin. A White-tailed Kite at the Raymond Airport, *Pacific*, WA June 19 was at a location that has been vacant for several years (RW). In Oregon, one at the Newport



Airport, *Lincoln*, June 8 (*fide* RB) was an early fall dispersant. A new Peregrine Falcon breeding location in e. Washington was located in *Yakima* (*fide* AS) and an adult and an immature along the Columbia R., *Benton*, July 23 (AS) could represent another location. Six Yellow Rails at Fort Klamath, *Klamath*, June 30 (PaSu) indicate that this isolated population remains extant. A high count of 6 nesting pairs of Sandhill Crane on Conboy N.W.R., *Klickitat*, WA produced four young, only one of which survived (JE). This is their most consistent breeding location in the state.

Six Black-bellied Plovers at Atkins L., *Douglas*, WA June 4 (AS) were very late migrants for the interior. An ad. Pacific Golden-Plover at Dungeness, *Clallam*, WA July 6 (PL) was the only report of either species. The Semipalmated Plover near Conconully, *Okanogan*, WA June 10 was near where a territorial pair was found in 1991 (D. Paulson); the only Regional breeding records are a handful from the outer coast. The high count of Semipalmated Plovers was 5600 at O.S., July 31 (SMa). A territorial Solitary Sandpiper in the Oregon Cascades at Olallie Meadows, *Marion*, July 1–12 (JL) provided the first evidence of breeding in the state since the 1980s, when  $\leq 2$  pairs were present at Gold L. bog, *Lane*, for several summers. Semipalmated Sandpiper numbers were lower than last summer's high counts, with a peak of 12 adults on Whidbey I., *Island*, WA July 8 (SMI). An ad. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at Crockett L., *Island*, July 2–5, ( $\dagger$ SMI, m.ob.) was the first adult recorded in Washington. An ad. Reeve at Kent, *King*, WA July 27–28 (DV, m.ob.) furnished the first summer record for the Region since 1990. Wilson's Phalaropes displayed nesting behavior at 2 w. Oregon locations: in the n. Cascades e. of Timothy L., *Clackamas*, June 21 (TJ) and in the Willamette Valley at Baskett Slough N.W.R., at the same site where nesting was confirmed in 1994 (SDo). A ♀ Red Phalarope at Bend, OR July 14 (TC) had confused the high desert with the high Arctic

### Jaegers to Alcids

Parasitic Jaegers are quite uncommon in spring on Puget Sound; one at Seattle June 1 (S. Atkinson) was also late. Adult Long-tailed Jaegers were found in the Strait of Juan de Fuca July 7 (PL) and in the interior at the Walla Walla R. delta, *Walla Walla*, WA July 22 (M&MLD). They are very rare anywhere except in offshore waters. Franklin's Gulls are becoming more scarce on the westside. This summer's records included three at Everett, *Snohomish*, WA June 22 (DV), an adult at Warrenton, *Clatsop*, OR July 1 (DB, JJ), a HY bird at Blaine, *Whatcom*, WA July 6 (C. Miles), and one immature at Bottle Beach, *Grays Harbor*, WA July 22 (SMa). The Heermann's Gull population evinced the largest percentage of HY birds recorded at Grays Harbor, WA since

1983 (TW). Their northward movement was large as well; 550 were at Port Angeles, *Clallam*, WA by July 5 (PL). Four Ring-billed Gulls were found nesting at Everett, *Snohomish*, WA (J. Flavin); the species had not been found breeding in Puget Sound previously. Two Glaucous-winged x Western Gull nests on concrete pilings at Willamette Falls, Oregon City, *Clackamas*, were found June 27 (TJ); this is the only known location away from marine waters where intergrades breed.

**SA** The large Caspian Tern breeding colonies at Everett, WA and Grays Harbor, WA were both almost unoccupied this summer, for very different reasons. The Everett colony had occupied a temporarily bare area on a construction site at a naval base; this summer the Navy "discouraged" their breeding efforts at the site (*fide* F. Bird). There were no obvious reasons behind the Grays Harbor colony disappearance, especially since some Caspians apparently nested in both Willapa Bay and the mouth of the Columbia River (BT). Since both colonies numbered in the thousands, displaced Caspian Terns seemed to be everywhere (BT, TW). In Bellingham, WA, at least 300 summered on warehouse rooftops and exhibited courtship behavior, without breeding (TW). The impacts to the Pacific Coast population of the temporary (we hope) loss of 2 of their largest colonies remain to be determined.

Elegant Terns were not reported this season for the first time since 1990, even though both Brown Pelican and Heermann's Gull numbers were indicative of ENSO-type conditions. The Arctic Tern colony in Everett, WA was not vacated; 3 pairs produced five offspring (J. Flavin). In addition, ad. Arctics were found away from the colony this summer: one in Bellingham, *Whatcom*, WA June 21 (TW) with roosting Caspians and one at Deer Lagoon, *Island*, WA July 2 (SMI). Similar to last summer, large numbers of Com. Murre (2400) were found off Westport, WA in mid-July (TW), probably indicating early departure from the colonies. One Ancient Murrelet at Yaquina Head, *Lincoln*, OR July 1 (*fide* RB) was at a location that has produced several summer records. Extremely low numbers were noted on pelagic trips off Westport, WA in July (TW), with a peak count of only three. One seen well inside Puget Sound, near Lopez I., *San Juan*, June 29 (J. Nestler) raises some hope that a few were successfully foraging in inside waters.

### Cuckoos to Mimids

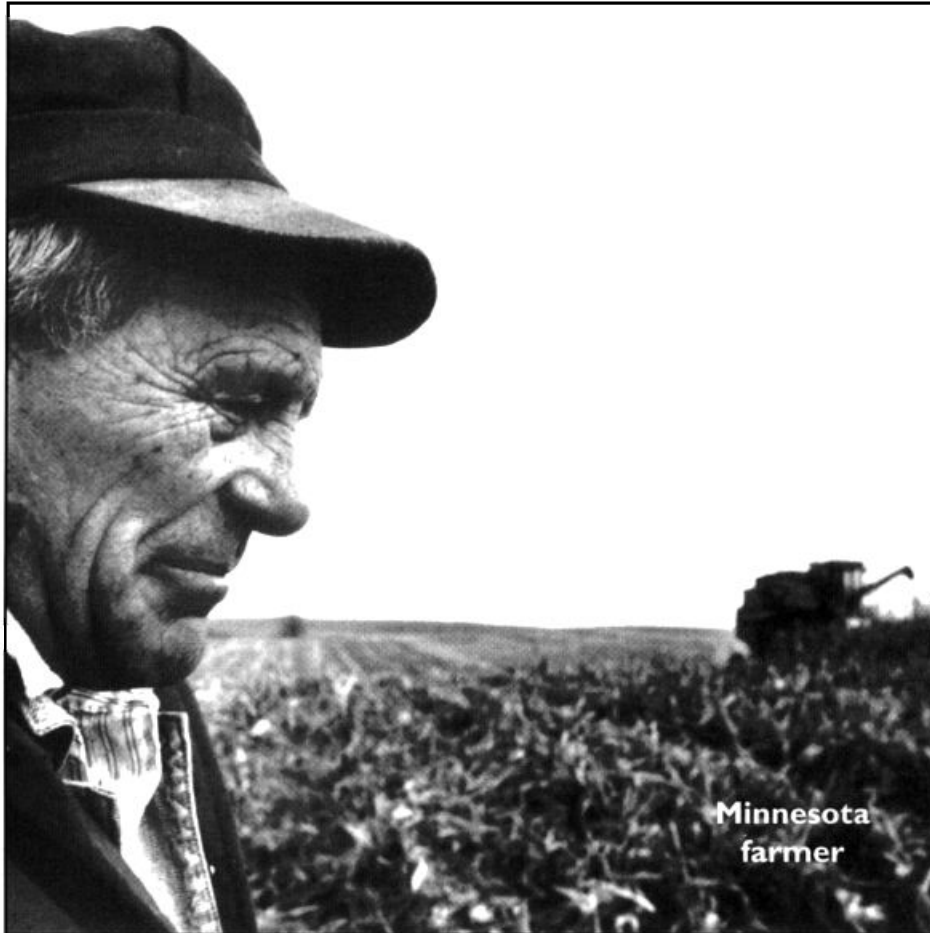
A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was in Fields June 24 (T. Love); they are almost annual vagrants in s.e. Oregon. A ♂ Costa's Hummingbird was in Bend, OR June 5 (*fide* TC); the majority of the

Oregon records are from that area. An ad ♂ Allen's Hummingbird in Sutherlin, *Douglas*, July 22–24 ( $\dagger$ K. Wilson) was one of very Oregon records away from the s. coast. A Red-naped Sapsucker nested with a Red-breasted Sapsucker in the Oregon Coast Range in the Five Rivers area of s.e. *Lincoln* in early June (*fide* RB). The hybrid young fledged June 27. Records of pure pairs nesting on the w. slope of the Cascades are not unexpected, but are worthy of mention: A pair fledged two young in the Abbott Burn, w. of Timothy L., OR (ES, TJ), for a *Clackamas* first nesting record, and a pair were near Rockport, *Skagit*, WA June 25 (SJo). A Williamson's Sapsucker pair was found along Bridge Cr., s. of Ironside Mt., *Malheur*, June 16 (AC), the very edge of their breeding range in s.e. Oregon. Two males and a female leaving a cavity in Abbott Burn (TJ, ES, PS) furnished an unusual westslope record and provided the first evidence of breeding in *Clackamas*, OR. Also on the westside of the Oregon Cascades, 5 nests were found between Fish L. and Dead Indian Rd., *Jackson*, June 22 (HS *et al.*). White-headed Woodpecker records from the edge of their Oregon breeding range included one at Eldorado Campground, *Baker*, July 2 (AC) and one June 22 in e. *Jackson* (HS). Black-backed Woodpecker breeding in *Malheur* was confirmed by Bureau of Land Management biologists in June at Ironside Mountain (*fide* AC).

An above-average number of Least Flycatcher reports included singles at Eloika L., *Spokane*, WA June 4 (JA); Spokane, WA June 8 (JA); Monroe, *Snohomish*, WA June 10 (B. Boyes); Willow Cr., *Gilliam*, OR June 11 (C. Corder); Spring Cr. Forest, *Union*, OR June 17 (MP); a male at Champney's Slough, *Okanogan*, WA June 20 (SJo); and >two at Noisy Cr. Campground, Sullivan L., *Pend Oreille*, WA July 8 (NLa). A Least Flycatcher nest was found at Holliday Wayside near Mt. Vernon, *Grant*, July 3 (AC); the only known Oregon nesting locale Ash-throated Flycatchers at Oaks Bottom, Portland, OR June 14 (R. Shepard *fide* HN) and at Wenatchee, *Chelan*, WA July 14 (KK) were local rarities. A very healthy smattering of E. Kingbird from the westside included 7 Oregon records from June 19–July 21 from *Clackamas* (TJ), *Tillamook* (P. Kearney, *fide* HN), *Coos* (DM), *Clatsop* (MP), *Linn* (JL), *Marion* (JL) and the Sandy R. delta, *Multnomah*, June 30 (PaSu), where nesting has been documented recently. The smaller number of w. Washington records included one from Monroe, *Snohomish*, June 28 (KK) and two from *King* in July (E. Mahaffy, D. Beaudette).

Bank Swallows are rumored to nest w. of the Cascades in *Snohomish*, WA, and reports of singles at Sultan July 8 (SMI) and at Startup July 9 (KK) lend credence to that. Three other Bank Swallow reports from the westside were probably migrants. A Scrub Jay was at Seattle, WA July 30 (E. Norwood); this is still n. of their reg-

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ular range. A singing Rock Wren on Kelly Butte, *King*, WA July 4 (EH) added to the number of w. Cascade locations where the species probably breeds. Three singing birds on Saddle Mt., *Clatsop*, July 1 (MP) apparently represent a 3rd breeding location in the Oregon Coast Range. In the lower Rogue R. valley, they were observed throughout the summer at Lost Creek L. Dam and Applegate Dam (J. Livaudais, *fide* HS). Northern Mockingbird reports included one at Cove Beach near Arch Cape, *Clatsop*, OR July 3 (J. Martin), one at Everett, *Snohomish*, WA July 23 (JE), and an apparent breeding pair with a juvenile near the Vernita Bridge, *Grant*, WA June 11–13 (T. Greager, AS). The only confirmed Washington breeding record is also from *Grant*, in 1990. A **Brown Thrasher** at American Camp, *San Juan*, June 26 (†J. Desgrollier *et al.*) furnished the first multiple observer record for Washington.

### Vireos to Finches

A *plumbeus* Solitary Vireo was at Fields June 12 (DB); there are now >3 records from there. Oregon observers are continuing to find new Red-eyed Vireo breeding locations in the lower Columbia R. drainage. In addition to known areas at Sauvie I. and the Sandy R. delta, three were at Smith-Bybee Lakes Natural Area, between Portland and Sauvie I., July 8 (HN); several were near Roslyn L., *Clackamas*, June 22–July 9 (PS), and one was on Grand I., *Yamhill*, July 4 (*fide* BB).

With the exception of the Chestnut-sided Warblers, all warbler vagrants were species expected almost annually. A ♂ Tennessee Warbler was at Fields June 7 (T. Kenefick). Northern Parulas were found at Granite Falls, *Snohomish*, WA June 22 (†DV) and there was a female at Malheur June 15 (†AC). Four Chestnut-sided Warblers were found: An ad. male at Hanford Site, *Benton*, WA June 20 (†C. Duberstein), an ad. male at Wapato, *Yakima*, WA June 23 (†B. Boekelheide), one at Fields June 26 (*fide* HN), and a singing male at Mares Egg Spring, *Klamath*, OR July 1–15 (PaSu) was seen carrying food July 9 (M. Moore). A singing ♂ “Myrtle” Yellow-rumped Warbler was at Seattle, WA June 22 (†SJo); there are very few June records of this form. A ♂ Black-and-white Warbler was at Malheur June 11 (DB). American Redstarts were at Boardman, *Morrow*, OR June 11 (PaSu), and at Fields June 13 (DB) & 21 (*fide* HN). Ovenbirds were at Malheur June 4 (PaSu) and at Fields June 9 (S. Russell).

A N. Waterthrush along Lava Cr., s.w. of Lemolo L., *Douglas*, OR June 18 (R. Maertz) was roughly 15 mi. s. of a known nesting site at the Salt Cr. bog in the central Oregon Cascades. The singing Wilson’s Warbler along E. Camp Cr. in extreme s.w. *Baker* July 2 (AC) was in an area where their breeding status is not well known. Two pairs of Yellow-breasted Chat were at the Sandy R. delta, *Multnomah*, OR during

the period (DB, PaSu); they were found nesting here last year for the first time in decades.

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks are annual vagrants in Oregon: A male came to the same feeder in Cape Meares, *Tillamook*, June 10 (J. Thompson *fide* HN) that it frequented last year and one was at Silver L., *Lake*, June 9–15 (R. Elston). The ♂ Indigo Bunting at Eugene, OR from May–June 22+ (T. Shelmerdine) was presumably the same bird present last year. Green-tailed Towhees are regular breeders at only 3 locations in the Blue Mts. of Washington: at Biscuit Ridge and Lewis Peak, *Walla Walla*, and at Wenatchee Guard Station, *Asotin*. They were found at Biscuit Ridge and the guard station this summer (KK, JA). Clay-colored Sparrows are rare breeders in Washington: Two males returned to the location e. of Spokane where they bred last summer (JA), although there was no indication of successful breeding this year. Others were at Camas Cr. Burn, *Chelan*, June 10 (MS) and a very rare westside summer record came from Olympia, *Thurston*, where a male was present June 14–July 2 (†E. Kraig, †M. Carmody, m.ob.).

Vesper Sparrows are gradually becoming more difficult to find away from their primary nesting areas on the westside, so one at Dungeness, *Clallam*, WA July 4 (BN) and two in s.w. *Clackamas*, OR June 21–23 (TJ, PaSu) were noteworthy. A Lark Sparrow near Breitenbush, *Marion*, OR June 29 (S. Sparkman *fide* BB) was unexpected; they are very rare away from the Rogue and Umpqua valleys. One pair of Black-throated Sparrow on territory near GI Ranch, *Crook*, OR May 21 (HN) was the only report of this species, which inundated the region last spring/summer. Indications of the coastal race of Fox Sparrow (*P. i. fuliginosa*) breeding in the San Juan Is. were obtained in 1992. Further evidence comes from Sucia I., where many were found singing this summer (C. Blake).

Tricolored Blackbirds continue to turn up in new locations in Oregon; four were found at Forest Grove, *Washington*, June 6 (M. Harris *fide* HN), a new location for this species in the Willamette Valley. Apparently they were not present at their n.e. Portland location (JJ). In e. Oregon, three males were at Wamic, *Wasco*, July 15 (D. Lusthoff). Yellow-headed Blackbird are rare breeders in w. Washington: Three males and two females were breeding at Deer Lagoon, *Island* (SML). A ♂ Great-tailed Grackle remained through the summer at Malheur (HN), their only regular haunt in Oregon. The best White-winged Crossbill invasion since 1992 was restricted to Washington mountains. They were reported from the Blue Mts., with ten at Anatone Butte, *Asotin*, June 13 (KK); the Selkirk Mts., with flocks at Salmo Mt., *Pend Oreille*, July 10–22 (T. Andrews, RW); the Okanogan Highlands, with 50 at Rogers L., *Okanogan*, July 23 (SML) and 88 at Thunder Mt., *Okanogan*, July 30 (AS);, and the Cas-

ades, with two at Rainy Pass, *Snohomish*, July 23 (SML), >three at Pratt L., *King*, July 28 (N Ferrguson), and numbers at Slate Pass, *Okanogan*, July 29 (J. Duemmel).

**Contributors (subregional editors in bold-face):** Jim Acton, David Bailey, **Range Bayer** (*Lincoln*), **Barb Bellin** (Salem area), **Thais Bock** (Tacoma area), Alan Contreras, Tom Crabtree, Mike & Merry Lynn Denny, Joseph Engler, Glen & Wanda Hoge, Eugene Hunn, Tim Janzen, Ken Knittle, Nancy LaFramboise, Paul Lehman, John Lundsten, Stuart MacKay (SMA), Steve Mlodinow (SML), Don Munson, **Harry Nehls** (w. Oregon), Bob Norton, Mike Patterson, **Tom Rogers** (e. Washington), **Howard Sands** (Rogue valley), **Dory & Stan Smith** (north Olympic Peninsula), Mike Smith, Elmer Specht, Andy Stepnewski, Patrick Sullivan (PtSu), Paul Sullivan (PaSu), Dick Veit, Terry Wahl, Robert Woodley.

—Bill Tweit, P.O. Box 1271, Olympia, WA 98507–1271; and Jim Johnson, 10405 N E 9th Avenue, Apt. G-10, Vancouver, WA 98685