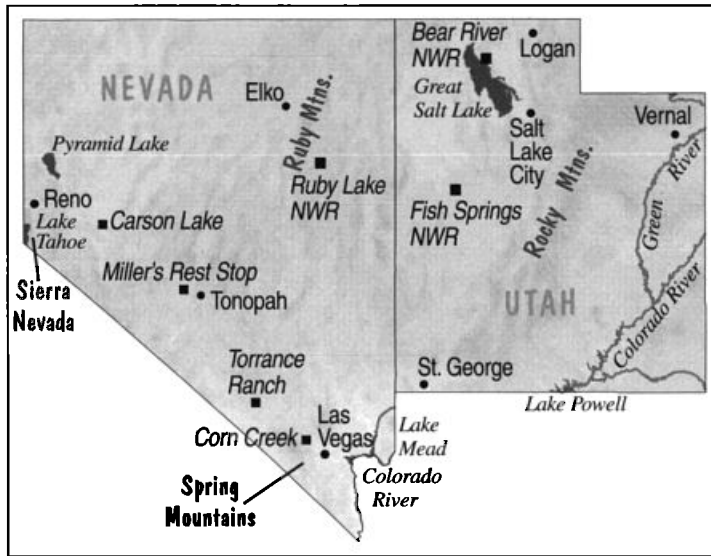


# Great Basin



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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 Pahrnagat 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 (fide 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 Phoeebes 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, *Lyon*, 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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The 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