

Mexico

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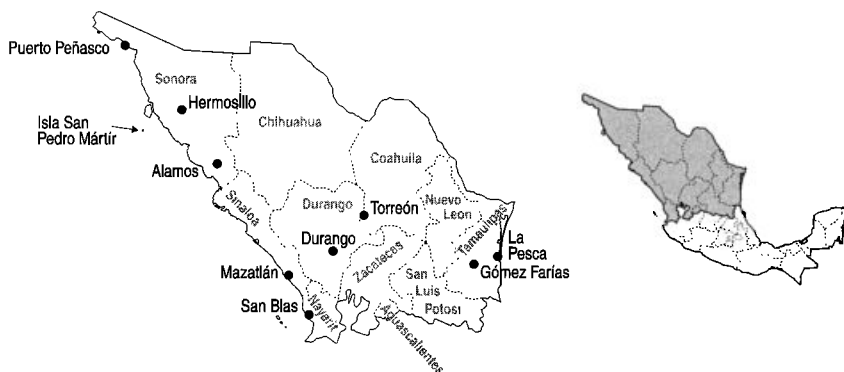
Mexico

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As is usual in the summer months, we received fewer reports than for other times of the year. This period, however, we received a particularly large contribution from Northern Mexico, particularly Chihuahua and Tamaulipas.

NORTHERN MEXICO

as conceivably wanderers from expanding U.S. populations as from Mexican ones. In the first week of Jun, singles and several pairs of Muscovy Ducks were seen along the Río Sabinas (HGdS) and along the Río Corona and at Parque Los Troncones, including a female with 7 ducklings less than one week old upstream of



Arvin reports that above Gómez Farías, Tamaulipas, the rains and peak breeding by most birds were both about two weeks behind schedule this year, beginning around 1 June rather than in mid-May.

TINAMOUS THROUGH SWIFTS

At least 4 Thicket Tinamous were heard in the first week of Jun, somewhat n. in the lower foothill and mountain canyons of the Sierra Madre Oriental at Parque/Balneario El Tigre in the headwaters of the Río Corona, Tamps. and at Parque Los Troncones in Cañon La Peregrina (headwaters of Río Purificación) (DK, TB); this species was past its song peak at El Cielo Biological Station, Tamps. by 23 Jun (JCA). Several Great Blue Herons were observed just s. of Nuevo Casas Grandes, Chih. 27 Jul (DK). Seven Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks seen near Janos, Chih. 27 Jul (MSM, m. ob.) could be just

Parque El Tigre (DK, TB).

A pair of Cooper's Hawks were heard cackling at Ejido Miraflores on the Río Corona in the first week of Jun, suggesting breeding (DK, TB). A Northern Goshawk was seen 29 Jul near Ejido Cebadillas, Chih. (approx. 28° 40' N, 108° 19' W; MSM, m. ob.). An Ornate Hawk-Eagle was displaying around El Cielo Biological Station in late Jun (JCA). One light-morph ad. Collared Forest-Falcon was being harassed by Brown Jays above Parque Los Troncones in early Jun (DK, TB). A Bat Falcon was reported in N.L. on the road to Rayones 5 Jul (RS, JS, AGS, IG). A calling Crested Guan was seen in a Montezuma Cypress at Parque/Balneario El Tigre 4 Jun (DK, TB). Singing Quail was past its song peak at El Cielo Biological Station, Tamps. by 23 Jun (JCA). Around 17 Long-billed Curlews were foraging in an irrigated area at Ejido San

Pedro, Chih. 1 Jun (BH, SD). Several Laughing Gulls were foraging over agricultural fields n. of Ciudad Victoria, Tamps. 1 Jun (DK, TB).

Six Eurasian Collared-Doves were found in Camargo, Chih. 10 Jul, 5 of them in a trailer park at the s. edge of town (ph. SW, RW, JS, SB). A Greater Roadrunner was in a cultivated field on the s. outskirts of Madera 27 Jul (MSM, m. ob.). Red-billed Pigeons were numerous but not vocal in the lowlands and lower foothills of Tamps. around Ciudad Victoria and the Río Corona in the first week of Jun (DK, TB), but they were singing at middle elevations (roughly 1070 m) at Alta Cima, Tamps. in the same week (HGdS). A pair of Blue Ground-Doves with an imm. were at Bocatoma II near Gómez Farías, Tamps. 5 Jun (HGdS). As in early Apr (see the report for spring 2003), White-crowned Parrots were fairly inconspicuous and in pairs above Gómez Farías in the first week of Jun (HGdS). A pair was being followed by a fully-grown young bird at the El Cielo Biological Station in late Jun (JCA). In the first week of Jun, 10–15 Red-crowned Parrots in small groups or pairs were seen flying over Balneario El Tigre and Parque Los Troncones (DK, TB).

Several Squirrel Cuckoos were seen and heard at Balneario El Tigre in the first week of Jun (DK, TB). Tamaulipas Pygmy-Owl was still singing at the El Cielo Biological Station in late Jun but not as frequently as in spring (JCA). Two or 3 Chimney Swifts were heard and well seen the small village of Guemez, around 25 km n. of Ciudad Victoria on Hwy 101, in the first week of Jun, heard most frequently just before afternoon rains (DK, TB).

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH STARLING

An Azure-crowned Hummingbird in the clearing at Alta Cima 4 Jun (HGdS) was low according to Arvin (2001). Displaying male Bumblebee Hummingbirds were numerous at La Perra, Tamps. (2000 m elevation) in late Jun (JCA). A Lewis's Woodpecker was recorded at 2800 m elevation on Cerro Potosí 14 Jun (AH)—the 2nd record ever (and 2nd record this year) in N.L. An Olivaceous Woodcreeper was high at 1800 m elevation above El Cielo Biological Station in late Jun (JCA). Ivory-billed Woodcreepers were feeding chicks in a nest at the El Cielo Biological Station late Jun (JCA). A wood-pewee, presumed Eastern, was seen along Hwy 101 n. of Ciudad Victoria on the late date of 2 Jun (DK, TB). An Eastern Phoebe near an irrigation ditch along Hwy 97 s. of Reynosa, Tamps. 2 Jun was thought to be a tardy northbound migrant (DK, TB). A Willow

Flycatcher at a willow-lined tank nw. of Ejido San Pedro 1 Jun was a migrant, not on territory (BH, SD). A pair of nesting **Western Kingbirds** were feeding 2+ chicks at the Pharr/Reynosa International Bridge 1 Jun; the nest was under the sun/rain protection structure over the inspection area (DK, TB). Several **Scissor-tailed Flycatchers** at km-post 108 on Hwy 97 s. of Reynosa and at Guemez in the first week of Jun were s. of their mapped breeding range (DK, TB). No Tamaulipas Crows were seen around Ciudad Victoria and the Río Corona in the first week of Jun; several Chihuahuan Ravens were present in these areas (DK, TB).

A Mangrove Swallow was n. and inland at Presa Las Adjuntas/Vicente Guerrero, Tamps. in the first week of Jun (DK, TB). Canyon Wrens were present but not numerous in the canyons at Parque Los Troncones and Parque El Tigre in early Jun (DK, TB). An American Robin at Alta Cima 4 Jun represents a species overlooked for sw. Tamps by Arvin (2001). Small numbers of European Starlings were seen around Ciudad Victoria in the first week of Jun, including ads. frequenting a hole in a dead snag in the flooded portion of Presa Vicente Guerrero (DK, TB).

WARBLERS THROUGH BLACKBIRDS

A Crescent-chested Warbler was near Ejido Cebadillas 29–30 Jul (TF, MSM, m. ob.). Two or 3 Yellow Warblers were singing along the Río Corona in several days in early Jun (DK, TB). A Golden-cheeked Warbler was seen in Parque Ecológico Chipinque, Monterrey, N.L. 9 Jul (RK). A **Black-throated Gray Warbler** was in a mixed flock s. of Ejido Cebadillas 28 Jul, perhaps an early migrant. A singing male **Prothonotary Warbler** was in the Bald Cypress along the Río Corona 3 Jun (DK, TB). Two or 3 male Summer Tanagers were along the Río Corona, where not known to breed, in the first week of Jun (DK, TB). Eight Yellow-winged Tanagers were in the large clearing at Alta Cima in the first week of Jun (HGdS). About 8 Lark Buntings (some males still in alternate plumage) were s. of Janos 31 Jul (JD, m. ob.).

In the first week of Jun, **Crimson-colored Grosbeaks** were occasionally singing in the forest around Alta Cima (and foraging individuals were seen eating leaves of an unidentified vine and fruits of *Trema micrantha*) and in the lower foothills on the outskirts of Gómez Farías (HGdS); the only observation in the lower foothills around the Río Corona was of one female at a fruiting fig tree (DK, TB). One female Blue Grosbeak at Alta Cima 3 Jun (HGdS) was high accord-

ing to Arvin (2001). Several **Lazuli Buntings** were s. of Janos and n. of Nuevo Casas Grandes 27 & 31 Jul (MSM, m. ob.). A male **Painted Bunting** was seen 30 Jul in streamside willows at the Puente Huapoca over the Río Sirupa, Chih. (29° N, 108° 13' W, around 1600 m elevation; TF, m. ob.). A female **Red-winged Blackbird** at Alta Cima 4 Jun (HGdS) was high for the sw. Tamps. region. A male **Yellow-headed Blackbird** was near Janos 27 Jul (MSM, m. ob.).

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CENTRAL MEXICO



After a prolonged dry season lasting to late May in most of the subregion, June and July were wet. Localities are in Veracruz unless otherwise stated.

Abbreviations: A.W.S. (Alvarado wetland system); L.B. (Las Barrancas); L.P. (La Piedra); M.P. (Malpais, 2300 m elevation), Sa. (Salinas), Xa. (Xalapa, 1300 m elevation).

HERONS THROUGH NIGHTJARS

A couple of **Black-crowned Night-Herons** in the Río Papagayo, Gro. 1 Jul (AOI) were outside of the breeding range mapped by Howell & Webb (1995). Two **Aplomado Falcon** nests were found at L. P. and L. B. roads just n. of Alvarado 2–3 Jun, rare during the breeding season in this area. Five **King Rails** were heard and seen in the heart of the A.W.S. 2–3 Jun and 1 Jul, belonging to an apparently isolated population in the lowlands of cen. Ver. A **Spotted Sandpiper** seen at a small river in the A.W.S. 28 Jul provided an early record. Two **Stilt Sandpipers** were seen at the Río Limón part of the A.W.S., early records for this transient species. A **Gull-billed Tern** was seen 3 Jun near the mouth of the Alvarado lagoon, somewhat s. the breeding-season range mapped in

Howell & Webb (1995). A late **Forster's Tern** in breeding plumage was at the Papaloapan R. part of the A.W.S. 17 Jun. Royal Terns seem to stay in the A.W.S. throughout the year, but there is no confirmed nesting record yet. Two **Common Terns** were seen in the A.W.S. 23 Jun, a late record.

A nesting pair of **Red-lored Parrots** was in the heart of the A.W.S.; according to the literature, the mangroves are not a habitat for the species during the breeding season. **Common Nighthawks** were seen 3 Jun at L.B., 24 Jun at Sa., and 28 Jun at A.W.S., s. of mapped breeding range. Four **Spot-tailed Nightjars** were calling at the entrance of the L.B. road.

HUMMINGBIRDS THROUGH GOLDFINCHES

Female **Green-breasted Mangos** (known

as summer residents in Ver. and adjacent states) were seen 3 Jun at L.P. and 28 Jun at A.W.S. **Green Violet-ears** were apparently absent in Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones, D.F. through 25 Jul but were conspicuously vocal there on every visit from 26 Jul through Aug (SA). A pair of **Magnificent Hummingbirds** was at U.N.A.M. botanical garden 19 Jun (HGdS). Two very vocal male **Lucifer Hummingbirds** were at M.P. 12 Jul (BS), slightly e. of normal range. Two male **Bumblebee Hummingbirds** were defending territories at M.P. 12 Jul. A **Ladder-backed Woodpecker** was heard near Insurgentes and Xola, deep inside the urbanized parts of Mexico City, where rare, 12 Jun (HGdS).

A **Least Flycatcher** was seen s. of Sa. 28 Jul, somewhat early. A **Common Tody-Flycatcher** nest with young was seen in the s. A.W.S. 2 Jun, in the n. margin of the species' range. An **American Dipper** was seen in Parque Nacional Desierto de los Leones 14 Jun (SA). Two **European Starlings** were near Metro Universidad 12 Jun (HGdS; MPV); this scarce wanderer in the D.F. had apparently never before been recorded in Ciudad Universitaria. A male **Red-legged Honeycreeper** was well seen

in tropical deciduous forest at Cerro del Tepeguaje, Gro. 30 Jun (AOI); this species is known to emigrate from Gro. in late summer/early fall, and this record in seemingly bad habitat may have pertained to such a migrant. One **Rusty-crowned Ground-Sparrow**, extremely rare in the D.F., was in the U.N.A.M. botanical garden 12 Jun (RW), and a pair was seen there 19 Jun, the male singing vigorously from 15 m high (!) at the top of a tree (HGdS, RW, AOI).

Cinamon-bellied Flowerpiercers, absent from the open pine woods at 3500 m elevation above Jalatlaco, Méx. in dry mid-May, were conspicuous there 23–25 Jun, coinciding with an increase in hummingbirds there (HGdS). Several **Black-chinned Sparrows** were singing and defending territories at M.P. 12 Jul. One vigorously singing Sierra Madre Sparrow was above Jalatlaco 24 Jun, as was a Canyon Towhee—very high at 3200 m elevation (HGdS). Three Northern Cardinals and a Varied Bunting were at the U.N.A.M. botanical garden 12 Jun (RW), and 2 male Northern Cardinals were there 19 Jun (HGdS, AOI, RW). A Blue Grosbeak was at Cerro del Tepeguaje, Gro. 30 Jun (AOI). Single nests of Ochre Oriole on the L.B. road 2 Jun and along the Limón R., A.W.S. 28 Jul were near the s. margin of their breeding range. As every year, multitudes of Lesser Goldfinches arrive to Xa. and farther downslope to breed during Jun and Jul, e. of their mapped range.

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SOUTHERN MEXICO



A Great Egret and 15 Cattle Egrets at Piedra Azul Dam and 25 Cattle Egrets at the Tlacolula sewage discharge area, all 6 Jun, represent new late dates for these species in the Oax. Valley. Birds that seemed somewhat early at Barra de Navidad, 7 km e. of Puerto Escondido, 30 Jul include one Osprey, an American Golden-

SA A pair of Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers was found nesting near Piedra Azul Dam above Teotitlán del Valle (Forcey et al.). This is the first confirmed nesting of the species in cen. Oaxaca, although the species was reported as possibly nesting along San Felipe Creek in spring 1998. These birds were first seen 22 May, but nesting was not observed until 6 & 10 Jun. In addition to being the first nesting for the area, the nest showed some interesting characteristics not previously noted for the species, which has been reported to nest exclusively in tree cavities. When first seen, the Sulphur-bellieds were interacting with a pair of Great Kiskadees, which are common nesters in the area. From the observations that followed, it is possible that the Sulphur-bellieds were usurping an active kiskadee nest. This pair of Sulphur-bellieds built their nest on top of a kiskadee nest, about 12 m up in a fork of a eucalyptus tree (a typical nest site for kiskadees in cen. Oaxaca). The Sulphur-bellieds provided the nest with dried grasses and other herbaceous material that formed a dome over the old nest. In the photographs, this newer material is clearly distinguishable from the kiskadee nest below. They were seen to enter the nest cavity on both Jun visits to the site.

Plover, one Snowy and 3 Semipalmated Plovers, 2 Black-necked Stilts, a Whimbrel, 2 Sanderlings, 20 Laughing Gulls, a Caspian Tern, and 4 Black Skimmers. Six Lesser Nighthawks were well seen roosting on dead limbs at Playa Bachoco, 2 km w. of Puerto Escondido, 30 Jul.

Contributors: Susan Beck, Jim Scanlon, Renee West, Steve West. All reports are from Oaxaca by John Forcey.

YUCATÁN PENINSULA



Weather was hot and humid, as is usual for this period. A concentration of Black Catbirds inland near Izamal, Yucatán, where the species is normally rather scarce, was noteworthy. In addition, Mangrove Cuckoo was found as far inland as the southern portion of the state of

remained? There were several early reports of Neotropical/Nearctic migrants. Are some of these truly early, or is it just that we have more people looking—or are more birds oversummering than in years past?

GREBES THROUGH TITYRAS

A group of 50 American White Pelicans at Churburná near Progreso, Yuc. 18 Jun (DB) and other reports—such as 5 photographed on a sandbar with nesting flamingos in Ria Lagartos Biosphere

Reserve 7 Jun 1979 (BM)—documented occasional oversummering. Four Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were at Hacienda Tabi, Yuc. 5 Jul, where first observed in Nov and then again in Mar and Apr (*vide* BM). This species was observed in numbers near the Ria Lagartos Biosphere Reserve for the first time last Nov, and their recurrence may be due to the changes in habitat caused by Hurricane *Isidore*. This species wanders in the subregion and is not frequently observed there.

A Hook-billed Kite and a Double-toothed Kite were first recorded in Rancho Santa Marta in n. Q. Roo in Jul (PW). A **Zone-tailed Hawk** at Playa del Carmen, Q. Roo 3 Jun (DB), along with other summer sightings across the peninsula, indicates the possibility that individuals are resident in the subregion. A Collared Forest-Falcon at a forested cenote-cave in Rancho Chankín near Izamal 8 Jul was watching over the abundant Cave Swallows and about 200 Turquoise-browed Motmots flying in and out of their nesting area in the cave.

Yucatán. Is there a yearly inland dispersal of certain coastal species during the late spring/summer breeding season that has previously gone unnoticed? Or did Hurricane *Isidore*, which sat over the northern coast of Yucatán for 30 hours 22–23 Sep 2002, cause some birds to perform “escape flights” inland, where they have



Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher is a cavity-nesting tyrannid throughout its range. This photograph, taken in early June near Piedra Azul Dam in the Valley of Oaxaca, documents the first confirmed nest in central Oaxaca and illustrates a heretofore-unreported nesting behavior: the construction of a dome-shaped nest of plant material on top of a Great Kiskadee nest. Photograph by John M. Forcey.

Two Semipalmated Plovers and 4 Short-billed Dowitchers at Churburná 18 Jun (DB) probably represented oversummering birds. One Semipalmated Plover was also observed in the coastal lagoon near Telchác Puerto, Yuc. 14 Jul (DB), but this could have been a migrant. Spotted Sandpiper is one of the last to leave the peninsula and first to return, so the sighting of one at Chelém on the n. coast of Yuc. 29 Jul (DB) is not surprising. Also observed at the same time and place were 2 Whimbrels (DB). Two Ring-billed Gulls were reported in the coastal lagoon near Telchác Puerto 14 Jul (DB); and a single Caspian Tern was at Churburná 18 Jun along with 6 Common and 6 Forster's Terns (DB). Black Terns are transients in late spring and return as early as 14 Jul, when 15 were observed in the coastal lagoon near Telchác Puerto 14 Jul (DB).

Two Mourning Doves were at nearby Xcambó as early as 14 Jun (DB). A Yellow-billed Cuckoo was netted 25 Jul at Rancho Hobonil, s. Yuc. (LC); it could have been either a transient or a resident. Of even more import was the netting (and photographing) of a Mangrove Cuckoo at the same location 10 Jul (LC). Mangrove Cuckoo previously has been known only from the coastal zone, although one was observed at Hacienda Tzalamcab 10 km e. of Izamal and another at San José Tecoh, 8 km s. of Izamal 16 Jul (BM). The question arises as to whether the distribution of this secretive species has always included these areas, or is there a seasonal movement; or has Hurricane *Isidore* altered their movements in some way?

A Least Flycatcher was netted as early as 8 Aug at Rancho Hobonil (LC), and a Fork-tailed Flycatcher was seen in the

same area of Celestún 11 Jun through Jul, feeding on fruits of the poisonwood tree (VM, DB, FC). A female Gray-collared Becard was observing feeding on fruit of tree known locally as "kulin-ché" 1 Jul in forest behind the village of Santo Domingo, n.-cen. Yuc. (BM). A male Black-crowned Tityra, as uncommon as the previous species, was at Hacienda Tabi 13 Jul (BM).

SWALLOWS THROUGH ORIOLES

Purple Martins were reported flying over Rancho Santa María as early as 27 Jun (PW), while 4 juv. males perched on cables with 7 Tree Swallows 15 km s. of Izamal at Rancho la Piedra 16 Jul (BM). Six pairs of Cave Swallows still had active nests in rafters in the main plaza at Izamal 8 Jul (BM). Another interesting find this summer was a good number of

Black Catbirds throughout the area around Izamal 30 Jun through 16 Jul. Probably one of the earliest dates ever recorded for Yellow-throated Warbler in the subregion was 29 Jun, a single bird at Celestún (VM, DB, FC). A Black-and-white Warbler was netted at Rancho Hobonil 23 Jul (LC), and a Prothonotary Warbler was netted there 25 Jul (LC). Louisiana Waterthrush is known to pass through the subregion early, but the one seen 8 Jul at Rancho Santa María was the earliest thus far (PW). A male Orchard Oriole was observed at Rancho la Piedra 15 km s. of Izamal 16 Jul (BM), while another male was netted at Rancho Hobonil 5 Aug (LC).

EXOTICS

Six Tricolored Munias were reported at Celestún 29 Jun and 7 Jul (VM, DB, FC). The first report of this species in the subregion, and indeed in Mexico, was in 1993 in Chichchulub, Yuc. (Eugene Anderson, *vide* BM), and its first appearance in Celestún was in 1998 (DB).

Contributors (area compiler in boldface): David Bacab, Luis Chluim, Francisco Cutz, Alex Dzib, José Loria, Barbara MacKinnon, Victor Marín, Ismael Navarro, Paul Wood.

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