

our knowledge, this may represent the first documented occurrence of the two species occupying the same location during the breeding season. Irregular during any season, 2 White-winged Crossbills were in Routt in late Jun (AS). A Lesser Goldfinch in Skyline, Teton, on 7 Jun (BR) was well north and out of habitat for Wyoming.

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Idaho & Western Montana



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The warm and dry weather trend of late spring continued throughout the summer period but intensified beyond all expectations. After June, it was unbelievably hot; in fact, both states experienced the warmest July ever recorded in 107 years of weather data. A strong and persistent high-pressure ridge over the Rockies allowed heat to build and prevented storms or cooler Pacific marine air from penetrating inland. At most locations, records were shattered for numbers of days above 90° F and for highest temperatures. The average daily high for Missoula, Montana in July was an incredible 96.6°, which was higher than every city east of the Rocky Mountains—including those in Texas! Hot, dry conditions and irrigation drawdowns greatly diminished streams and reservoirs, if not completely depleting them. It is assumed that countless nesting waterfowl were left high and dry and that significant nest abandonment occurred, but as usual, few specific data were reported. The drought impacted nesting land birds too, as evidenced by re-

ports of scarce sagebrush-associated birds in Idaho and high mortality among Tree Swallow and Mountain Bluebird broods in Montana.

Abbreviations: Camas (Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID); latilong (area encompassed by one degree latitude and one degree longitude used in mapping bird distribution in both Idaho and Montana).

DUCKS THROUGH FLYCATCHERS

A Hooded Merganser with young near Challis 4 Jun (BW) provided a rare Idaho breeding record and a first for Latilong 13. Even more spectacular was a Horned Grebe family seen in *Boundary* 11 Jul (HK) that furnished Idaho's first verified nesting record. Great Egrets are unusual in w. Montana, so singles in *Beaverhead* (NK) and *Madison* (EH) 3 Jun were noteworthy. A Snowy Plover discovered near Somers 19-21 Jun (ph. DC) was Montana's 7th. Amazingly, w. Montana's 4th Red Phalarope was at that same location 18-19 Jun (ph. DC). If accepted, a Long-tailed Jaeger at C. J. Strike Res., Owyhee 6 Jul (BH) would be Idaho's 11th. Always rare in the n. portion of the Region, a Franklin's Gull was near Somers, MT 20 Jul (DC). A Little Gull that stopped near Preston, ID 16 Jul (AB) will bring in Idaho's 8th report, if accepted. Bonaparte's Gulls are unusual in midsummer, so 2-7 near Somers, MT 17 Jun-31 Jul (DC) were notable. One of the highlights of the season was a Least Tern discovered near Stevensville 10 Jun (BD, ph. WT), which provided a first record for w. Montana. Eurasian Collared-Doves were recorded at new n. Idaho locations, including Bonners Ferry 23 Jun (GS) and Kamiah, Lewis 28 Jun (MH). An observation of Long-eared Owl fledglings at Craters of the Moon N.M., Butte 24-28 Jun (MM) confirmed breeding in Idaho's Latilong 20. In

Black Swift news, a pair seen near Powell, ID 25 Jun (MH) provided a first for Latilong 6, and in Montana, a nest site discovered in Ravalli 5 Jul (RP) will be the Treasure State's 4th known breeding location, if verified. The species is a rare and very local breeder in the Region, with a poorly understood life history. If accepted, an Anna's Hummingbird in Kootenai, ID 20-23 Jul (ph., †DW), will represent a first for the county and Latilong 2. Single vocal Alder Flycatchers were reported in Coolin, ID 14 Jun (RB) and Glacier N.P., MT 26 Jun (PS); although increasingly reported, nesting has not been documented in the Region.

JAYS THROUGH FINCHES

Documentation of Steller's Jay fledglings near Ola, Gem, ID (FZ) confirmed breeding in Latilong 11. A spectacular find was a Purple Martin s. of Rexburg 29-30 May (DCI, †CW), which provided Idaho's 15th report. The only Bewick's Wren was in Gem, ID 30 Jul (MW), the species is rare but increasingly reported. The Wood Thrush at Camas since 19 May was last observed 14 Jun (JC). A Varied Thrush seen near Ennis L., MT 1 Jun (NK) represented a first for Latilong 38. Northern Mockingbirds made a very good showing in Idaho, with singles in Bonneville 2 Jun (TM), Camas 22 Jun (BDv), Nez Perce 28 Jun (TG), and Fremont 4 Jun-3 Jul (CW). Far less expected were those in Montana, where one was near Elliston 16 Jun (DS) and another near Gardner 30 Jun-23 Jul (EHe, JP) provided a first record in Latilong 39. A Sage Thrasher was well out of range in Latah, ID 2 Jun (ph. TG). Single Idaho Brown Thrashers, rare but nearly annual, were at Camas 1-3 Jun (JC) and in Butte 13-19 Jun (†JCI). If accepted, a Curve-billed Thrasher in Ada 28 Jul (†HK) will represent Idaho's 2nd record. Always rare in Mon-

SA Something was afoot with Brewer's Sparrows in the Pacific Northwest this summer, because a widespread irruption of the birds occurred outside of their sagebrush desert breeding range. In mid-Jun, reports began to trickle in from n. Idaho, in *Kootenai*, *Latah*, and *Nez Perce*, where the sparrows were discovered defending territories in clearcut forests, riparian areas, and weedy patches. Estimates of Brewer's Sparrow populations at these sites were from "a few" to about a dozen birds, and the birds apparently persisted at these locations throughout the summer. Unfortunately, there were no reports of confirmed nesting, but a sparrow seen carrying food in *Latah* provided circumstantial evidence of breeding. A prevailing theory for this phenomenon was that Brewer's Sparrows found unsuitable conditions in sagebrush desert areas in late spring, causing them to seek open, brushy habitats elsewhere. Lending credence to this explanation were several Idaho B.B.S. reports from sagebrush desert areas, which reported unusually few Brewer's Sparrows.

tana, Ovenbirds were detected at Red Lodge 7 Jun (BJ) and s. of Bozeman 29 Jun (LAH). The warbler of the season was Idaho's 5th Hooded Warbler in Owyhee 11 Jun (ph., †GSA).

Lark Sparrow breeding was confirmed in Idaho's Latilong 4, when a pair with fledglings was observed in *Nez Perce* 28 Jun (TG). Idaho Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, rare but regular, were recorded near Sun Valley 2 Jun (BHP), in

Kootenai 7-8 Jul (J&HS), and at Island Park 27 Jul (CW). Not to be outdone, Montana reported a pair near Bozeman 18 Jun (IS). A Common Grackle was found in *Ada*, ID 6 July (HK), where they are not annual. The only Great-tailed Grackle sighting was at A.F.R. 15 Jul (CT). An observation of Lesser Goldfinches with young in Bellevue, ID 22 Jun (KC) established a first breeding record in Latilong 19.

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Great Basin



Rick Fridell

Temperatures this summer were exceedingly high throughout much of the Great Basin, with average daily June and July temperatures setting record highs in both northern and southern Utah. In addition to the heat, it was also abnormally dry, with very little measurable precipitation through mid-July. These conditions contributed to chronic wildfires and one of the most intense fire seasons on record, both in number of wildfires and total acres burned. Thunderstorms in late July provided some much-needed relief. As usual, these conditions limited summer birding activity in the Region; however, intrepid observers still managed many noteworthy sightings. Highlights included Prothonotary and Hooded Warblers in Nevada and a Scarlet Tanager and possibly Utah's first confirmed Painted Bunting at Fish Springs National Wildlife Refuge.

Abbreviations: Antelope I. (Antelope Island S.P. and Causeway, Davis, UT); Bear R. (Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, Box Elder, UT); Corn Cr. (Corn Creek Unit, Desert N.W.R., Clark, NV); Farmington Bay (Farmington Bay W.M.A., Davis, UT); Fish Springs (Fish Springs N.W.R., Juab, UT); H.B.V.P. (Henderson Bird Viewing Preserve, Clark, NV); L. Mead (Lake Mead N.R.A., Clark, NV); Lytle (Lytle Ranch Preserve, Washington, UT); Miller's R.A. (Miller's Rest Area, Esmeralda, NV); Ouray (Ouray N.W.R., Uintah, UT); Red Hills (Red Hills G.C., St. George, Washington, UT); Zion (Zion N.P., Washington, UT).

WATERFOWL THROUGH TERNS

One of the most unusual sightings of the season was of a wayward first-summer Pacific Loon, first observed 16 Jul at Panguitch L., Garfield, UT (RF, KC). The bird remained at this seldom-birded high-elevation site through at least 25 Jul (ph. TA). Also unusual but a bit more expected were basic-plumaged Common Loons summering at Enterprise (JK, KW) and Kolob Reservoirs, Washington, UT (RF, KC).

Common Black-Hawks are only found regularly in the Region in the sw. corner of Utah, and this summer there were at least three pairs nesting along the Beaver Dam Wash and one pair nesting along the Santa Clara R., Washington, UT (LT, RF et al.); one of the nesting pairs along the Beaver Dam Wash successfully fledged 2 young hawks. Red-should-

ered Hawk sightings are increasing in the Region, and ads. were observed at Fernley, Lyon, NV (21 Jul; DS), Fish Springs (24-31 Jul; MMI, RL, AR), and Bishop Springs, Millard, UT (31 Jul; ph. RF). Zone-tailed Hawks were observed again this summer in the Kolob Meadows/Lava Pt. area of Zion (25 Jun-25 Aug; ph., †TA, RF); however, nesting has not been confirmed.

A flock of 7 Whimbrels made a nice surprise 2 Jun at Panguitch L., Garfield, UT (JK, KW). Surprisingly, another Whimbrel was reported 2 Jun at Huntington S.P., Emery, UT (PJ, SC). Three White-rumped Sandpipers were found 3 Jun at Deseret Ranch, Rich, UT (†MS, ph. DW), and another was photographed 21 Jul at Antelope Island (p.a., TA). There are only six previous accepted White-rumped Sandpiper records in Utah. A juv. Stilt Sandpiper and a Common Tern were among the highlights observed on a 16 Jun tour of Deseret Ranch, Rich, UT (MS et al.). Least Terns were observed at the Glendale G.C., Salt Lake, UT (23 Jun; ph. TA) and at Mason Valley W.M.A., Lyon, NV (20 Jul; †JRy, PM).

DOVES THROUGH WARBLERS

A White-winged Dove visiting a Salt Lake residence, Salt Lake, UT 24 Jun (BH) was n. of expected range. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo observed 16 Jun at the confluence of the Delores R. and Colorado R., Grand, UT (TA) was the only one reported in the Region. A Greater