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— Rick Wright, winging@aba.org

Mid-July to mid-September

Southeast

Hurricanes were the news this summer, with Dennis in mid-July and the incomparably devastating Katrina in late August. Dennis brought to Georgia inland reports of Wood Stork, Brown Pelican, Magnificent Frigatebird, Parasitic Jaeger, and Sooty Tern; Alabama had no fewer than 23 Sooty Terns reported. In the days after Dennis, Tennessee's Pickwick Lake sheltered Parasitic Jaeger and a record-high 14 Sooty Terns, along with second state-record Royal and first state-record Bridled Terns, while Kentucky's 7 Sooty Terns were joined by an Audubon's Shearwater, possibly only the second record ever away from the coast. It's anybody's guess what Dennis had to do with the male Broad-billed Hummingbird found on North Carolina's Outer Banks July 14, or with Arkansas's astonishing adult Northern Gannet, a potential state first photographed at an unprecedented time of year for this species inland. A Limpkin was in South Carolina's Piedmont in early August.

In the last days of August, Katrina pushed Band-rumped Storm-Petrels as far inland as Kentucky and Tennessee. In the latter state, Pickwick Lake hosted an amazing assemblage of pelagics including Long-tailed Jaeger (fourth state record), Black Skimmer (third), Magnificent Frigatebird (third), and an apparent South Polar Skua (unsurprisingly, the state's first if accepted!); Tennessee's third record of Royal Tern was of an adult feeding a young bird on the Mississippi River September 1. Georgia's Lake Seminole hosted Parasitic Jaeger, Sandwich, Bridled, and Sooty Terns, and 6 Magnificent Frigatebirds; a Long-tailed Jaeger, said to be the state's third, spent Labor Day weekend at Lake Hartwell. Alabama birders found Wilson's and Band-rumped Storm-Petrels and as many as 26 Sooty Terns at inland sites.

Happily, some rarities were found even without the dubi-

ous help of tropical storms. Ruffs were found in late August at Chincoteague and at Florida's Merritt Island NWR, following a Curlew Sandpiper in Georgia in mid-July. A long-lingering Black-headed Gull will be Georgia's third if accepted, while a Cave Swallow found August 25 was the first report for the state. A North Carolina pelagic trip found a White-faced Storm-Petrel August 14.

Northeast

July and early August produced at least half a dozen reports of frigatebirds between Maine and Cape May; some were Magnificent Frigatebirds, others cautiously left unidentified. Other southern seabirds—perhaps sent off course by Dennis—included a Red-billed Tropicbird photographed July 11 off Machias Seal Island, a Sandwich Tern at the elbow of Cape Cod July 21, and a Sooty Tern at Pennsylvania's Conejohela Flats July 24. A White-winged Tern was found in Acadia National Park mid-August.

Other southern wanderers included Vermont's third Tricolored Heron in 20 years and a White Ibis in Rhode Island. A mid-August Mississippi Kite in Connecticut was somewhat unseasonal for this typical spring overshoot. A Black Vulture was in Wilton, Maine, in early September. Scissor-tailed Flycatchers were found in Ottawa, Ontario, and on Nova Scotia's Brier Island in early August; a month later, Prothonotary and Prairie Warblers strayed north to Nova Scotia. Strong southwesterly flows in early September brought Blue-winged, Prothonotary, Prairie, Kentucky, and Hooded Warblers to Newfoundland. A Fork-tailed Flycatcher in Maine July 12 had started its journey even farther south, as had New Jersey's

first Green Violet-ear, a less-than-one-day wonder discovered August 23. Exactly one month earlier, a Brown-headed Nuthatch finally made the sixteen-mile trip across Delaware Bay, a first documented record for New Jersey, if accepted.

If accepted as wild, a Graylag Goose on an oil-rig on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland May 2 will be a first for North America. A Ruddy Duck with a brood provided a first breeding record for Maine, while a

tantalizing Boreal Owl, still on the state's "hypothetical" list as a breeder, was heard in northern Maine in late July.

Among the first arriving shorebirds of the fall was a *baueri* Bar-tailed Godwit in Newfoundland July 13, the province's second. Cape Cod shorebirders enjoyed a long-staying Wilson's Plover, up to two Little Stints, and a Curlew Sandpiper at Chatham's South Beach; as rich in birds as in birding tradi-



Short-tailed Albatross, Monterey Bay, August 12, 2005.

Photo courtesy Don Doolittle.

tion, the same site was being used by more than 600 Roseate Terns and a Franklin's Gull in early August.

Midwest

Dennis brought single Sooty Terns to Ohio and Illinois, while Katrina pushed frigatebirds into Indiana and Iowa in early September. Kansas, in a summer of marvels (see this issue's "Birding Landscapes"), added a new *order* to its state list when 4 **Band-rumped Storm-Petrels** appeared at Meade State Lake July 18. Less likely to have been hurricane-borne were a Laughing Gull in South Dakota and an Arctic Tern in Indiana, both in mid-August.

Even apart from the seabirds, the summer had a distinctly southern flavor, with Roseate Spoonbill in Kansas and White Ibis in that state and in Missouri in August. Missouri birders enjoyed a Black Rail and a singing Swainson's Warbler; a potential state-first **Cave Swallow** appeared August 8. In Iowa, Worm-eating Warblers bred in the southeast, and Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks and Brown Pelicans were seen repeatedly; the male Vermilion Flycatcher was still present end of August. A Black Vulture provided the state's fourth record, while a **Royal Tern** August 20 will be Iowa's first, if accepted. A White-winged Dove settled in in Cook Co., Minnesota, and Eurasian Collared-Dove continued its advance in North Dakota and Missouri. Wisconsin scored its third **Green Violet-ear** in August. At the same time, Michigan's amazing **White-eared Hummingbird** provided the northernmost record for the species ever.

A Ruff was found in North Dakota in late July; two Curlew Sandpipers were found in Michigan earlier in the month. A Black-headed Gull was reported from its "usual" northwest Iowa site in August.

Texas

There was an unprecedented number of White-eared Hummingbirds in the state in July and August, the most surprising a bird in Lubbock. A Northern Jacana was reported from Brownsville in July, the season of greatest rarity for this rare visitor.

Two Greater Shearwaters seen off Port Aransas in August, if accepted, will join only a dozen other records on the state list; another was found dead after Katrina.

A Purple Martin roost in Harlingen in mid-August was estimated to contain 100,000 birds; a Great Horned Owl was seen plucking somnolent birds from the trees.

Southwest

In Arizona, too, it was the summer of the White-eared Hummingbird, with as many as eight attending the famous feeders of Beatty's Guest Ranch in the Huachucas; much more surprising was an individual **White-eared Hummingbird** in Durango, Colorado, through early August. A female Berylline

Hummingbird was an infrequent and fleeting sight at feeders at Arizona's Ramsey Canyon in July and August, while a Ruby-throated Hummingbird was a casual visitor to Lea Co., New Mexico, August 10. A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** photographed in Utah in late August will be a first record if accepted. Southeast Arizona's "Mexican" rarities performed well this summer, though their timing could have been better: most appeared just *after* the ABA Convention left Tucson. As many as three **Aztec Thrushes** were in Carr Canyon in early August, hard on the heels of a **Streak-backed Oriole** along the Santa Cruz River; these birds proved quite elusive, but not as elusive as the **Crescent-chested Warbler** that spent several mid-August days playing hard-to-get in Miller Canyon. Black-capped Gnatcatchers continued to be seen in the Santa Ritas and at Patagonia Lake, and Rose-throated Becards were feeding fledged young at the Patagonia Roadside Rest by September 7.

Post-breeding waders were less notable this summer than last, but single Glossy Ibis were found at the Salton Sea, near Westmoreland, California, and near Tucson in August. A Roseate Spoonbill was at Bitter Lake NWR, New Mexico, in July, and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons appeared in Colorado and in Arizona in late August. A Black Vulture was found in Bent Co., Colorado, in early July; birders searching for that bird two days later found a **Cave Swallow**, potentially the state's first.

West Coast

Pelagic excitement *without* hurricanes! Brown Boobies were reported in July from California to Washington. Farther offshore, the globally rare **Short-tailed Albatross** was seen near Santa Cruz Island in early July and in Monterey Bay, California, in August; a recently dead bird found in Oregon in early September had been banded at a breeding colony in Japan. A Red-tailed Tropicbird was seen well off northern California August 8, while a **Solander's Petrel** was photographed some 200 miles off the coast early in the month. Three "**Dark-rumped**" **Petrels**—either Hawaiian or Galapagos Petrels—were found off California in August. Equally big news was the sighting of a **Ringed Storm-Petrel** (*Oceanodroma hornbyi*) off Santa Barbara, California, August 2; well photographed, this will be a first North American record if accepted.

Eastern passerines in California this summer included an Eastern Kingbird in late July; a Philadelphia Vireo spent the first week of the month in Mono Co. A Field Sparrow sang in Humboldt Co. mid-July, while Painted Redstarts—an eastern species from the California perspective—bred at Big Bear Lake. Late-summer migrants on the Farallons included a Connecticut Warbler and a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, the latter only the eighth state record, if accepted.

A summering Crested Caracara in Santa Cruz was still present in early September. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons

were seen there and at Tijuana Slough, California, in early August.

An adult Curlew Sandpiper in Los Angeles August 13 was the second ever for that county. A Lesser Sand-Plover spent several mid-July days in Humboldt Co., California, while another was found at the mouth of the Necanicum River in Oregon.

Northwest

Yet another Lesser Sand-Plover was on St. Paul Island in the Pribilofs the end of August, where as many as 8 Gray-tailed Tattlers were being seen earlier in the month. Single Red-necked Stints were observed in Oregon and Washington in late July, and a juvenile Little Stint on the surprisingly early date of August 12 will be Alberta's first, if accepted. Ruffs were seen in Alberta and Oregon, and Sharp-tailed Sand-

pipers appeared in Alberta and on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula in late August. A White-rumped Sandpiper was reported on Iona Island, British Columbia, in August; the 100 Stilt Sandpipers at Salmon Arm were a record high count for the province, while Delta produced an Upland Sandpiper, two Bar-tailed Godwits, and a Hudsonian Godwit in August.

Three Mew Gulls were reported from Calgary in September. Southbound Long-tailed Jaegers were seen in Montana and Idaho, the latter report of a flock of 13 at Sand Point.

A Flammulated Owl nest near Battle, Wyoming, provided a first confirmed breeding record for the state. One of Canada's rarest breeders, White-headed Woodpeckers were observed in British Columbia's Okanagan in July and August. A Prothonotary Warbler was seen in southeast British Columbia in July, and a Say's Phoebe on St. Paul Island August 19 was the first of its species ever to venture onto the Pribilofs.

First South American Reserve for North American Songbird

American Bird Conservancy (ABC) and the Colombian conservation group Fundación ProAves announce the creation of the first reserve to be established in South America for a songbird that breeds exclusively in North America. The reserve will protect the wintering habitat of the Cerulean Warbler, which has experienced significant population decreases in recent years, mainly due to loss of habitat on both its nesting grounds in North America and its wintering grounds in South America.

The Cerulean Warbler nests in the eastern United States and Canada, from the lower Great Lakes region, southern Quebec and New England, south to northern Louisiana and northwestern Georgia. Within this area, the species breeds primarily in the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys, especially in the upper Ohio River Valley in West Virginia and western Pennsylvania. The species also ranges east to New York, Maryland, and Virginia.

"The Cerulean Warbler reserve is a ground-breaking step in the conservation of migratory song birds," said Mike Parr, Vice President for Communications at American Bird Conservancy. "This is the first South American preserve designed to protect a bird species that nests solely in the United States and Canada." The new reserve currently includes 500 acres of subtropical forest in

the Rio Chucurí basin of Santander, Colombia. The area, one of the last remnants of natural forest in the region, shelters high populations of wintering Cerulean Warblers; its purchase was made possible by a major donation from the British conservationist Robert Giles and by support

from other individual donors. The reserve also harbors three Critically Endangered bird species: the Gorgeted Wood-Quail, Chestnut-bellied Hummingbird, and Colombian Mountain Grackle, along with many other threatened and endemic birds.

"The Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, currently up for reauthorization in Congress, provided critical funding that helped to show that this region is important to the long-term survival of the Cerulean Warbler," said Parr. "This project and others like it provide a strong justification for the renewal of the Act."

The reserve in Santander is the focal point for a continuing regional conservation campaign for the warbler. Another key area for wintering Ceruleans, southwestern Antioquia, Colombia, has also been targeted by

ABC for further conservation efforts.

For more information, visit the American Bird Conservancy at www.abcbirds.org.

