

JUNE TO EARLY JULY 2007

BY RICK WRIGHT, WITH THANKS TO JON DUNN AND PAUL LEHMAN

Southeast

Two Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks briefly visited *Anne Arundel*, MD, in late Jun. A Ross's Goose in *Forsyth*, GA, in early Jul provided a rare summer record for the region. A pelagic trip from Cape Hatteras produced brief views of a Black-bellied Storm-Petrel in late Jun. A Brown Booby continued into early Jul in *Brevard*, FL. 2 different Magnificent Frigatebirds were seen from VA's Back Bay NWR in Jun. A shocking South Polar Skua spent several Jun days on a lake in *Gilmer/Murray*, GA; there are very few well-documented inland records for this species in the ABA Area. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher visited *Buchanan*, VA, in early Jul. A Bahama Mockingbird was in *Broward*, FL, in late Jun.

Northeast

2 Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were in *Lancaster*, PA, in late Jun. A Pacific Loon was in south coastal ME in early Jun. A Red-billed Tropicbird, apparently returning for a 3rd year, patrolled the waters around ME's Matinicus Rock through early Jul. A Magnificent Frigatebird visited RI in mid-Jun. A Brown Pelican was noteworthy in coastal ME in mid-Jun. A dark-morph Western Reef-Heron discovered in northern NJ in late Jun was refound and photographed a week later a short distance away in NY. A pair of Sandhill Cranes fledged a chick in western MA. 6 Black-necked Stilts were on Cape Cod in early Jun. Still present in early Jul, an adult Pacific Golden-Plover well-photographed in NL provided only a 3rd record for the continent's east coast. A Wilson's Plover was north to MA's Plum Island in mid-Jun. A Curlew Sandpiper was in coastal MA in early Jun; another appeared on Long Island in early Jul. A near-adult California Gull visited Cape May in late Jun. 3 Arctic Terns on Long Island in mid-Jun fit a pattern of late-spring records from south of the breeding range; such birds are often attracted to tern colonies. A Gull-billed Tern was notable in eastern MA in early Jun. A White-winged Dove at Red Indian Lake in Jun furnished a 6th record for NL and the province's first inland.

A Northern Wheatear visited *Essex*, MA, in mid-Jun; another was in NS later in the month. A Swainson's Warbler was reported heard in NS in mid-Jun. A Snow Bunting was a bizarre sight in *Rockland*, NY, in late Jun. A male Eurasian Siskin, said to be possibly a genuine vagrant, was photographed at a Labrador feeder in late Jun.

Mid-continent

A Black-bellied Whistling-Duck visited *Aitkin*, MN, in late Jun. A male Masked Duck re-appeared in *Kleberg*, TX, in late Jun. Casual

in MO in summer, a Western Grebe was in *Jackson* in mid-Jun. A Neotropic Cormorant in *Appanoose* in Jun will be IA's 3rd if accepted; another was in *Madison*, IL. An adult male Anhinga was in *Vernon*, MO, in late Jun. A White Ibis flew over *Scott*, MO, in late Jun. An adult Snowy Plover in *Boone*, MO, in mid-Jun will provide a first summer record for the state if accepted, while a pair on eggs at ND's Long Lake NWR in Jun moved that species off the state's "hypothetical" list directly onto its list of breeding species. MT birders discovered a Snowy Plover and a breeding-plumaged Red Phalarope in *Flathead* in late Jun. Late, early, or a non-breeding wanderer, a Western Sandpiper was at OH's Metzger Marsh in mid-Jun. A first-cycle Great Black-backed Gull at Arrowwood NWR in late Jun will be a second record for ND if accepted.

A Fork-tailed Flycatcher visited IL Beach State Park in early Jun, while a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was in *Hardin*, OH. Yellow-green Vireos were thought to be breeding in TX at Brownsville and Sabal Palm, while a Black-whiskered Vireo was videotaped at the latter site in mid-Jun. The TX Bird Records Committee seeks documentations for the Tamaulipas Crows being seen in the Brownsville area. If accepted, a Brown-chested Martin in *Grundy*, IL, in late Jun will provide a first state record and join earlier accepted records in AZ, MA, and NJ as only the fourth for the ABA area. A casual Prothonotary Warbler was singing in *Emmons*, ND, in mid-Jun. WI birders discovered 3 Kirtland's Warbler nests this summer, the first outside of MI in 6 decades. With 15-17 pairs known, Mangrove Yellow Warblers appear to be well established near TX's South Padre Island. A male Painted Bunting continued into Jul in *Story*, IA. Single Lesser Goldfinches were near Billings and Fort Benton, MT, in late Jun.

Southwest

Now very rare in the state, 5 juvenile Wood Storks visited *Yuma*, AZ, in mid-Jun. CO's 4th Harris's Hawk was photographed in *Pueblo* at the end of Jun. A Ruddy Turnstone was notable in *Eddy*, NM, in early Jun. A first-cycle Laughing Gull visited NM's Bosque del Apache in early Jun. A Parasitic Jaeger was photographed in *Eddy*, NM, in mid-Jun. A Plain-capped Starthroat spent a Jun week near Tucson. A male Berylline Hummingbird appeared at AZ's Ramsey Canyon in mid-Jun. Providing the state's first documented record if accepted, a Green Kingfisher was photographed in *Grant*, NM, in mid-Jun.

A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was north of its usual range in *Taos*, NM, in early Jul; another produced young with a Western Kingbird in *Yavapai*, AZ. Only the 11th for the state if accepted, a Yellow-green Vireo was seen repeatedly in *Pima*, AZ, through early Jul; a Yellow-throated Vireo was at the same location for much of Jun. A Red-eyed Vireo was singing in that



Snowy Plover, Montana. Photo © Dan Casey.

state's Huachuca Mountains in late Jun. A Prothonotary Warbler was on the lower San Pedro River in AZ in mid-Jun. A casual Yellow-throated Warbler was in AZ's Chiricahua Mountains in late Jun; though the subspecies of this bird was not determined, *albilora* would be expected. Single Kentucky Warblers were in *Santa Cruz* and *Cochise*, AZ, and *San Juan*, NM, in Jun. A male White-collared Seedeater photographed in *Santa Cruz*, AZ, in Jun was of the west Mexican race; there are other records of this subspecies from AZ, southern CA, and Baja, but thus far all have been considered likely escapes. An Eastern Meadowlark in *San Juan*, UT, in early Jun will likely be a first state record if accepted. AZ birders discovered unexpected summering Lawrence's Goldfinches at sites as far northeast as the White Mountains.

West Coast

Up to 3 Brown Boobies were seen off La Jolla, CA, in mid-Jun. A young Short-tailed Albatross flew past CA's Pt. Pinos in late Jun. Early Jul found a Reddish Egret in *Santa Barbara*, CA. A Mississippi Kite visited *San Diego* in early Jul. A Wilson's Plover visited *San Diego Bay* in mid-Jun. An intensive single-day search in mid-



Yellow-throated Warbler, *San Diego*, CA. Photo © Doug Aguillard.

Jun revealed 37 Horned Puffins in 7 coastal CA counties, while a total of 31 were in *Monterey* alone a few days later; smaller numbers continued into early Jul. Single Thick-billed Murres were in *Marin* and *Sonoma*, CA, in early Jun. A Lesser Black-backed Gull in *Orange*, CA, in mid-Jun may represent a first summer record for the west coast. A Whip-poor-will was in *Humboldt*, CA, throughout the period.

A Yellow-throated Vireo continued into early Jul in *San Diego*. A Red-faced Warbler discovered in *San Bernardino*, CA, in late Jun was still present in early Jul. A singing Yellow-throated Warbler was in *San Diego* in early Jul. A Prairie Warbler was heard near *Portland*, OR, in late Jun. OR's Basket Slough NWR hosted an Indigo Bunting into early Jul; a male was in *Vancouver*, BC, in early Jul.

Alaska

An immature Black-tailed Gull was on AK's Shemya Island in mid-Jun. Single Franklin's Gulls were at *Glacier Bay* and *Juneau* in late Jun. A female Oriental Cuckoo was photographed on *Shemya* and another *Cuculus* cuckoo was at *Gambell*, both in late Jun. Jun also found a Willow Flycatcher in *Juneau* and a Red-eyed Vireo in *Anchorage*.

The MBO Photo Library: A New Online Resource for Advanced Identification

BY MARCEL GAHBAUER

It was in October 2000 that a friend in Ottawa brought me to *Innis Point Bird Observatory* for a night of banding Saw-whet Owls, and I immediately fell under their spell. But as attracted as I was by the birds, I was equally impressed by the ability of the banders to determine the age class of most individuals, and I've been learning how to interpret molt patterns ever since.

Banders across North America swear by (and occasionally at!) Peter Pyle's *Identification Guide to North American Birds, Part 1* (Slate Creek Press). It is without question the most authoritative compilation of information on the ageing and sexing of North American passerines and near-passerines—indispensable to banders, and to any advanced birder. Where the swearing at the book comes in is that many banders and birders have a difficult time picturing the sometimes subtle differences between plumages as described.

Dan Froehlich's *Ageing North American Landbirds by Molt Limits and Plumage Criteria* (Slate Creek Press) goes a very helpful step further by illustrating with photos, but the examples are limited to relatively few species, and I have found that many people have difficulty imagining how such molt patterns would look in other birds.

It was while trying to simplify the learning process for appren-

tice banders at McGill Bird Observatory (MBO) that I began to develop the MBO ID Library as an online resource (www.migrationresearch.org/mbo/id/index.html). The basic concept is to provide typical photos of the body, wings, and tail of each species in each of its plumages, to be referred to in conjunction with Pyle's text. More recently, I added an introductory section to each account, highlighting the diagnostic features that are most useful for each species, as well as any caveats to be kept in mind.

Although I developed this tool for banders, I realized over time that by knowing what to look for, I was able to age a number of birds out of the hand, too, and that this resource could therefore be useful for all birders interested in pushing the limits of field identification. Some species accounts (such as Yellow Warbler and Baltimore Oriole) feature a full selection of photos for all age/sex classes, while others remain works in progress—we are continuing to add to the Library as photo opportunities (and my time as volunteer webmaster) permit. Comments and suggestions from users are most welcome, as are photo contributions of species we have not yet profiled.

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