

southwestern Oklahoma (Van Velzen, 1968, Bull. Oklahoma Orn. Soc., 1: 26).
—Wesley S. Isaacs, 1304 Lafayette Dr., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73119, 15
March 1980.

FROM THE EDITOR: Over much of its range, populations of the Interior Least Tern (*Sterna albifrons athalassos*) appear to be declining. In an attempt to ascertain the status of nesting populations, Robert L. Downing of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service surveyed by car and air the major river systems of the United States interior during the summers of 1974 and 1975. On the twelve major watersheds, 616 terns were actually sighted, from which Downing estimated a total nesting population of 1,250 birds. In Oklahoma, the following numbers were observed (estimates in parentheses): Red River 15 (25), Canadian River 2 (25), Cimarron River 40 (100), and Arkansas River, including the Quivara National Wildlife Refuge in Kansas and the Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge in Oklahoma 32 (50). Thus, about 15% of all nesting Interior Least Tern populations that were located were in Oklahoma. But the many ponds and lakes constructed on these watersheds during the last half century have reduced the frequency and severity of flooding that formerly provided the bare mid-stream sandbars that are so critical as nesting habitat. Populations may be completely lost if flood and chloride control projects are completed on the Edith Salt Plains and the Great Salt Plains. The species may have to be listed as endangered before the mistake of destroying nesting habitat through dredging is fully appreciated by the managing agencies (see Downing, R. L., 1980, Amer. Birds, 34: 209-211).—Jack D. Tyler.

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