

Notes on Lewis' Woodpecker. This woodpecker (*Melanerpes torquatus*) is interesting from the fact that it is neither a winter nor summer bird in this vicinity, but one of the most industrious foragers I have observed. Last summer there were but few acorns and I failed to notice a single bird though I am told that a few of them appeared but left immediately upon the advent of a spell of exceedingly warm weather. It is my belief that it was not the warm weather, but the lack of acorns that induced them to leave. This summer I observed the first bird during the last week in August and by the first of September they were observed by hundreds in one locality. From the diversity of size and plumage I am certain that the parent birds were accompanied by their broods. Their favorite resort is an eastern slope, wooded with white and live oak with now and then a bull pine and some clumps of underbrush, chaparral etc. Here there were acorns in abundance and the birds were numerous. They are now greatly diminished in numbers and less clamorous, but scattering birds may be seen in the hills, always haunting the oaks. The little Californian Woodpecker resents the intrusion and may often be seen sprinting after its big cousin, with malice in every movement. I am curious to know where the birds nest and if the acorn forms any part of their food, or whether it is the tender grub which induces them to such industry. Again I would like to know why these birds store up so much food and then leave it for other birds to eat, for certain it is that they are not here to eat it themselves. JOHN M. WELCH, Copperopolis, Calaveras Co., Cal. Dec. 18, 1898.

Notes on Audubon's Warbler and the Individuality of Eggs. In order to satisfy my curiosity, I shot a male Audubon's Warbler on Jan. 17 and placed the contents of its stomach under a microscope. I found that it contained, with the exception of a small black beetle, and a worm about one-half inch long, nothing but bits of grass. These warblers are abundant every year during the winter in this locality. They spend most of their time on the ground, feeding on grass in the orchards.

In further proof of the individuality of eggs, I have sets of eggs in my collection from two pairs of California Shrikes. Both pair nest within one-half mile of my home and I have taken eggs from each for the past five years. The eggs of pair No. 1 are smaller and rounder than the average specimens, and are very lightly marked. I have two sets in my collection from this bird. In No. 2 the eggs are all heavily marked. I have four sets of eggs from this bird and were it not for the set mark, an egg taken from one set and placed with the other sets from the same bird could not be distinguished.

WM. L. ATKINSON, Santa Clara, Cal.

Hylocichla Ustulata Oedica in the Sierra Nevadas. Mr. Oberholser in the *Auk* Jan. 1899 mentions Marysville as one of the breeding localities of his new subspecies,—*oedica*. I am certain the Marysville *ustulata* is a much better singer than that of Santa Cruz and other coast localities where I have heard it, or in any of the many localities in the Sierra Nevadas. By the way, it is rarely found above 4,500 ft. altitude on the west slope, but like several species it ranges up to nearly 7,000 ft. on the east slope. Some of these, as I remember them, are the House Finch and Bullock's Oriole. Our Yellow-billed Magpie seldom gets up to 2,000 ft. although the Black-billed Magpie gets up to at least 7,000 ft. I see one or more nearly every year at the summit of the C. P. R. R. At Truckee, Cal. and vicinity it is very common.

LYMAN BELDING, Stockton, Cal.

Early Bird Arrivals for 1899. VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOW (*Tachycineta thalassina*.) Observed Dec. 31, 1898. I thought this a rather unusual date to see a number of Swallows which I took to be this species, flying about in a violent rain and wind-storm at Point Reyes Station, Cal.

MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia arctica*.) Feb. 5, 1899. At Pinole, Contra Costa Co., Cal. I met with a large flock of these birds scattered all through a small valley of freshly-plowed ground. They were there by hundreds and any number

could have been secured. When met with they were feeding in precisely the manner of a Sparrow Hawk; they would pause fluttering in one spot, suddenly swooping down on some insect and immediately resume another position as before, always facing a strong wind which was blowing at the time.

T. E. SLEVIN, San Francisco, Cal.

Oregon Vesper Sparrow in Alameda Co. On the afternoon of October 8, 1898 while coming over the foot-hills north-east of Oakland, I shot an Oregon Vesper Sparrow, *Pooecetes gramineus affinis*. It was an adult male; one from a flock of five that were feeding among some tall grass, growing between two stubble-fields. The flock was so hidden in the tall grass, that I saw none except my bird until I fired, when the rest flew up, and were soon lost over the crest of a hill. So far as I have been able to learn, this is the first Oregon Vesper Sparrow taken in Alameda County, although two weeks later, on October 22, '98 Mr. C. W. Randall took an adult female from the same field, and presumably from the same flock. November 5, again found me in this field after another Vesper Sparrow, but I was doomed to disappointment, for I could not find a single bird.

JOHN M. WILLARD, 2221 Elm St., Oakland, Cal.

American Crossbills in Alameda Co., Cal. For many years I have been on the watch for the Crossbill in this part of the San Francisco Bay region, having seen them on several trips in Santa Cruz and Monterey counties. The former county lies along the ocean shore and in an air line from this locality, so I have naturally expected to some day see a few stragglers appear. In the first part of January of this year, at daylight on two or three occasions I noticed a flock of thick-set, quick-flying, piping birds leave the tops of some tall gum trees on the place and fly away. One morning I saw them fly to the top of some tall poplars, where I went to make out the species if possible. I saw at once that they were Crossbills and were feeding on the buds. Later in the day they flew to a large gum tree beside the house, where, after some delay, I made them out with the glass and soon secured one. Another was shot from the top of a Monterey cypress where they had gone to feed on the seeds of the cones, as I found later, on skinning them. Of the two birds shot on Jan. 26, 1899 one was in a greenish-red plumage showing a juvenile and was very fat with the crop full of soft seeds of the cypress and eucalyptus. The other male was of a rich golden-green plumage, flecked with cherry-red, showing an immature bird. On Jan. 30, 1899 a male was found dead under the big gum tree, and which must have been wounded by a long shot taken at the flock in the top of the tall trees and died on the cold night of the 30th. This was a male in adult plumage of a purplish-red with a few yellowish and gray feathers showing in the throat. The body of this bird was very thin. The weather becoming milder in a day or so the Crossbills disappeared, no doubt for their breeding grounds in the pine forests. I saw them in pairs in January 1897 at Pacific Grove where they could be heard in the pine-tops feeding on the seeds of the cones. This was on the edge of a small pond back in the forest. I have seen them come to the water's edge to drink. So far as I can find data this is their first appearance in Alameda Co. and I should be pleased to hear from anyone in the state who has observed them.

W. OTTO EMERSON, Haywards, Cal.

Albino Dwarf Hermit Thrush and Western Robin. Jan. 12, 1899 being a cold windy day drew many birds about the garden to feed, and while watching them from a window, one attracted my attention by its odd plumage, looking as though it had just arrived from the snowy regions. On shooting it I found it to be a partial albino Dwarf Hermit Thrush. Three outer tail feathers on one side are pure white while those of the other side are only tipped. The secondaries of the wing on one side were white-tipped, also several scattered white feathers on the rump and back. It proved to be a female and quite fat.

On Feb. 15, 1899 what was my great surprise upon shooting a Western Robin