

located near others of the regulation size and character. I am unable to learn that these peculiar nests have heretofore been commented upon. To my mind they are *roosting* nests, built for that exclusive purpose, possibly to shelter the male while its mate is brooding.

A mysterious crane (*Grus americana?*). The sonorous notes of cranes were heard on several occasions, always at a great height. In one instance the field-glasses showed five birds in all-dark plumage, circling round and round, in crane fashion, in company with three larger white ones with black, or dark, primaries. As memory serves me, they were identical in appearance with a similar flock seen in northern Illinois in the '80's, and which were doubtless Whooping Cranes. If these were not of that species, what were they? And if they were Whooping Cranes, why in California?

Black-and-White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*). During the past four years this species has been reported to the writer by local observers a half-dozen times or more, but these reports were never verified by actual specimens until early this last spring, when a bird was taken by Dr. L. B. Bishop near Los Angeles. Later, on April 6, I secured a male at Thermal, in Coachella Valley, feeding among the mesquites. These, I believe, are the second and third recorded captures for southern California. Mrs. L. U. Everhart, of Thermal, reported a specimen there in early March, possibly the same bird secured by me a month later. Apparently this species is becoming less rare in our region, or possibly bird students are making fewer mistakes in identifying the Black-throated Gray species.—L. E. WYMAN, *Los Angeles Museum, Los Angeles, California, June 9, 1922.*

A Unique Breeding Colony of Least Terns.—For several years a colony of Least Terns, the western form now called the Brown Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum browni*), had nested on the beach just south of the outskirts of Venice, Los Angeles County. (See Chambers, Condor, x, November, 1908, p. 237.) As this section built up, the terns had a harder and harder time of it trying to raise their young. I have found eggs within twenty feet of an occupied dwelling. Of course, with all the dogs and cats about, as well as curious children, there was not much chance for the poor birds. Finally the terns moved their breeding grounds across a canal, to the very last stretch of sand-dunes, and there nested for several years, but as the town continued to grow in population so did the tern colony decrease. When a bridge was built over the canal, that, of course, meant the end of the colony. The birds struggled along, however, till but a few were left.

On July 8, 1922, while I was hunting over the mud flats, a mile or more back from the sand-dunes, to my surprise I found that the terns had established themselves there in a most unusual sort of place for this species. It was gratifying to find them increased in numbers. They had chosen for their nesting grounds a portion of the dried-up mud flats, a little over a mile from the ocean. They will be in comparative safety there as they are in a posted gun-club preserve quite removed from dogs, cats and dwellings. Several nests were found, no nests at all really, the eggs being simply laid on the hard, dried mud. In some instances, where the mud was soft, the eggs were laid in slight depressions, scratched out by the bird and lined with a few weed stems. At this date sets of two eggs each were seen, but I did not ascertain the stage of incubation. I found two young birds just out of the eggs, one of the usual coloration, the other a light buffy bird. It looked almost yellow beside its nest mate.

The mud on which the birds were nesting, when wet, is of the most tenacious character. On the beaks of the nestlings there were masses of dried mud, accumulated, I suppose, when their bills got wet in being fed by their parents. I cleaned their bills but have been wondering if the mud would interfere with their successful rearing. A nesting site other than sand is a novelty in the life history of the Least Tern. I have seen most of their breeding colonies in southern California and they were all on the sandy beaches a short distance above high tide, or more rarely among the sand-dunes.—CHESTER C. LAMB, *Los Angeles, California, July 8, 1922.*

The Southward Range of the Santa Cruz Chickadee.—The southernmost place whence *Penthestes rufescens bartowi* has been recorded heretofore is near the mouth of the Little Sur River, Monterey County (Grinnell, Auk, xxi, 1904, p. 367; Jenkins, Condor, viii, 1906, p. 129). Coniferous forest growths of the humid coast type, such as are

inhabited by this chickadee, are, south of the vicinity of Point Sur, much restricted and far scattered. The last mainland representation of such forest is in the vicinity of Cambria, San Luis Obispo County, some 75 miles south-southeast of Point Sur. There are several square miles of woods there, consisting almost solely of the Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*).

Mr. Joseph Dixon was collecting at Cambria, October 27 to November 3, 1918, and found Santa Cruz Chickadees to be not uncommon there; he took five skins (now nos. 30232-30236, Mus. Vert. Zool.) on October 28 and November 1. There, then, is an apparently well established and rather far sequestered colony of the species. Comparison with seasonally similar specimens from the vicinity of Monterey shows the Cambria birds to average paler, nearer white, on the mid-ventral surface. This feature, however, is not pronounced enough or sufficiently uniform to warrant my considering it positively of phylogenetic significance.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, June 20, 1922.*

Road-runner Caught in the Act.—Probably everybody "has heard" that Road-runners eat the eggs and young of quail. Heretofore I have been inclined to class this rumor with the other one about their corralling rattlesnakes with cactus.

On July 9 I was inspecting the quail crop at the Tome Gun Club, near Belen, New Mexico. On the bank of an irrigation ditch, grown to willow bushes with here and there a cottonwood tree, my dog flushed a quail, which looked like an old rooster. At the same time, from the same place, the dog flushed a Road-runner, which hopped into a cottonwood. A careful look showed the Road-runner sitting dead still among thick foliage, with a light-colored object in his bill. I shot him, and the dog retrieved. The dog then pointed under the same tree, another quail flushed (the old hen) and on looking carefully I discovered a whole brood of chicks scattering in the weeds. I then examined the spot where the Road-runner had fallen, and found a dead chick, still limber and warm but unmutilated, matching the live chicks in size, and lying within a foot of the blood. The dead chick was still in the downy stage, with $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch pin feathers on the wing—smaller than a domestic chick when hatched.

The evidence is practically absolute that the Road-runner was caught in the act. His crop was empty. Possibly by coincidence, each of the five other Road-runners seen during the rest of the day were in the immediate vicinity of quail.—ALDO LEOPOLD, *Albuquerque, New Mexico, July 10, 1922.*

The Cedar Waxwing in Mexico.—On February 11 of the present year I was passing through the town of Tehautepec when I was greeted with what to me was a voice from the old home town, the low, subdued hiss of the Cedar Waxwing (*Bombycilla cedrorum*). There were several small flocks of six or eight taking their morning's exercise in a banana grove and apparently feeding there. During the next several days I was passing up the Tequixistlan River and saw several more flocks of about the same size along the trail. In the vicinity of Port Angel on the Pacific coast during the latter part of February and early in March there were a few of these birds scattered here and there. On April 16, while spending the day in Chapultepec Park in Mexico City, I was again pleasantly surprised to hear these same notes. There was a flock of twenty-nine birds circling around and occasionally settling in the pines, from which they flew down into the grass where they were foraging. Just a week later I was in the city of Monterey in the state of Nuevo Leon in the northern part of Mexico, where again I met a small flock of Cedar Waxwings.

Tehautepec is in the southern part of Mexico, is but a hundred feet or so above sea-level, is very hot, and has an abundance of irrigated tropical vegetation. The Tequixistlan basin is under about the same conditions, but without the irrigated areas; Port Angel at this season is dry and the trees are for the most part bare. In all of these places the inhabitants are Indians. Mexico City is at 7600 feet elevation, and has a cool climate; its vegetation is of the Oregon or northern California type. In Chapultepec Park, the ancient Aztec kings, the subsequent Spanish conquerors, and the following Mexican presidents, have had their palaces. Monterey is but a few hundred feet above the sea, is very hot, and has the floral and faunal aspect, as well as the climate, of