

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Red Crossbills Feeding on Juniper Galls.**—At noon on May 26, 1938, two Red Crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra*), apparently male and female, were watched for over fifteen minutes as they systematically foraged in the Utah junipers adjacent to our dwelling on the south rim of the Grand Canyon, Arizona. The birds were working on the small pear-shaped galls (about 1 cm. long), that were fairly common on these trees. These galls were made by one of the gall midges or flies, *Rhopalomyia sabinae*, of the family Cecidomyiidae. Examination of the galls disclosed that the untouched ones either had the egg or larva of this insect in their hollow centers, whereas all the galls that the crossbills had worked on were cut open and the insect egg or larva removed. The birds, intent on feeding, could be approached very closely and their method of attack determined. The gall was pierced on opposite sides near the base by the tips of the bird's bill; continued closing of the bill cut the gall completely through, except for the base. Finally, though this could not be perfectly seen, the tongue was deftly protruded into the opened gall to obtain the exposed egg or larva. The whole process of feeding on one gall took less than a couple of seconds, and obviously the bill played no part in extracting the enclosed egg or larva.

No other crossbills were observed feeding on the galls, although they were seen in yellow pines nearby. It is interesting to speculate as to whether this pair of birds alone had made the discovery of this available source of food.—FRANK RICHARDSON, *Grand Canyon, Arizona, June 3, 1938.*

**An Exceptional Influx of Wood Ibises into Southern California.**—Although there doubtless are Wood Ibises (*Mycteria americana*) in southern California every summer the numbers that have been observed this year are so large as to warrant special notice. In July, 1938, people began coming or telephoning to the San Diego Natural History Museum to report that they had seen the large white birds, until it became almost a daily occurrence. Ocean inlets, rivers, lakes and irrigated fields in localities too numerous to mention, and even the ponds at the zoo in Balboa Park, were reported as visited by the ibises. They evinced their customary fearlessness, allowing close approach and observation from automobiles along highways. The majority of the birds appear to have been immature. The largest figures reported were 1500 to 2000, seen by L. M. Huey in an 80-acre alfalfa field (where the ibises were eating grasshoppers) on August 7 and again on August 17, one mile east of Seeley, Imperial County. About 500 were reported by Bernard Bailey at Hedionda Slough, San Diego County, from about August 1 to 14. Individuals are still here, there being on this date seven birds in the Mission Valley pool to which I referred in a previous note (*Condor*, vol. 33, 1931, p. 29), and one in the zoo grounds, which has become so tame that it feeds from the hand.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, September 19, 1938.*

**Winter and Spring Gull Records from the West Coast of Mexico.**—The following notes on gulls were obtained on a trip to the coast and islands of western Mexico in the early part of 1938.

*Larus glaucescens.* Glaucous-winged Gull. Seen occasionally along west coast of Lower California (near Cedros Island, January 18, March 21; San Bartolome Bay, January 19-20; Magdalena Bay, January 29; San Lucas, February 1). One adult seen and another found dead on beach at Socorro Island, March 20; two immatures seen at Clarion Island, March 22; several at Guadalupe Island, April 6-8, and off San Martin Island, April 9.

*Larus occidentalis wymani.* Wyman Gull. Rather rare along southern part of peninsula of Lower California. Three seen at San Lucas, February 1. These birds, sitting on a small rock in the bay, were approached within forty feet, so that the color of feet and legs and the shape of the bill were clearly seen. They definitely were not *L. o. livens*, of the Gulf of California. This latter bird was not seen anywhere by me, although it was especially looked for.

*Larus argentatus smithsonianus.* Herring Gull. Small companies in northward migration: San Benito Islands, April 2-4; Guadalupe Island, April 8; San Martin Island, April 9.

*Larus californicus.* California Gull. The most common gull from middle Lower California south to Jalisco. As in the case of *L. glaucescens*, immatures were much more plentiful than adults in the southern part of the range. Seen in small numbers at Chamela and Tenacotita bays, Jalisco. One adult and one immature noted at Clarion Island, March 22; one immature near Alijos Rocks, March 30; common between Alijos Rocks and Cedros Island, March 31.

*Larus atricilla.* Laughing Gull. First met with at Banderas Bay, Jalisco, February 13; rather common from this point south to Acapulco and Escondido Bay, Oaxaca.

*Larus philadelphia.* Bonaparte Gull. Several seen at San Lucas, Lower California, February 1.

*Larus heermanni.* Heermann Gull. Common at Banderas Bay, Jalisco, February 13.—G. WILLETT, *Los Angeles Museum, Los Angeles, California, August 31, 1938.*