

**A Male California Quail Hatches a Brood.**—An instance of a male California Quail (*Lophortyx californica californica*) successfully incubating a set of eggs after the female had been killed was observed during the 1938 quail nesting study at the San Joaquin Experimental Range in the foothills of Madera County, California. The nest (S. J. E. R. no. A37, 1938) was discovered on May 24 under the edge of a small granite boulder. The female was then incubating a clutch of 20 eggs. A cock, presumably the mate, was perched in a nearby tree. Daily visits were made to the nest until May 28, and the hen was seen incubating on each occasion.

On May 31, female quail feathers, sufficient to indicate a kill, were found about 4 feet from the nest and a cock was found sitting on the eggs. The next day, June 1, the cock was again on the nest. He allowed the observer to approach within 3 feet without flushing.

On June 2, at 9:00 a.m., the nest was visited and no birds were found. Nine of the 20 eggs had hatched, as evidenced by pipping rings on the shells. Of the remaining 11 eggs, 2 were infertile and 9 were within one or two days of hatching, with most of the embryos showing sign of life. The low percentage of hatching success was possibly due to inefficient incubation on the part of the cock. The cock and his nine young were seen several times subsequently. On June 25, the last date of observation, only 4 young remained in the group.

These observations substantiate statements by Grinnell, Bryant and Storer (Game Birds of California, p. 529) and Price (Condor, vol. 40, 1938, p. 87) that the male California Quail will take over incubation in event of the female's death. The present observation is unique in that the cock succeeded in hatching at least part of the clutch and in caring for the chicks.—BEN GLADING, *San Joaquin Experimental Range, O'Neals, California, September 19, 1938.*

**Notes on the Distribution of Loons and Grebes in California.**—Knowledge that Dr. Joseph Grinnell is preparing a revised distributional list of the birds of California provides the incentive to make available certain accumulated information on occurrences of birds in this state. Readers familiar with our avifauna may find in these notes numerous obvious statements, but the facts to be presented, although known to many, appear to be unpublished. What may seem trivial and unworthy of mention now, if left unrecorded, may soon become lost through rapidly changing conditions. Man's influence upon bird life in his recent "development" of our state has been so profound that we are often unable to appreciate changes in avian populations until they have occurred. Then, we find that records of original conditions are lacking for comparison.

Specimen numbers refer to the writer's private collection of birds or to his field numbers, which are synonymous.

*Gavia immer*. Common Loon. No attempt has been made to differentiate subspecifically California taken examples of this species, although the validity of the race *elasson* (Bishop, Auk, vol. 38, 1921, p. 367) is acknowledged for breeding birds of the interior of the continent. Probably both forms winter in the state and their separation, requiring measurements of specimens, is impossible without birds in hand.

An adult male (no. 139) in full summer plumage was taken on a small fresh-water lake 2 miles southwest of Glen Ellen, Sonoma County, May 3, 1919. The birds are not uncommon along the coast in June; full plumaged adults and winter clad immatures (?) were found on Richardson's Bay, Marin County, and at the mouth of the Pajaro River, Monterey County, June 11 and 12, respectively, in 1938. An adult in full summer dress was observed on the California side of Topaz Lake, Mono County, July 6, 1923, where search failed to indicate that it was nesting.

*Gavia arctica pacifica*. Pacific Loon. It has been my experience that the present species is considerably more maritime in distribution along our coast than the Red-throated Loon. The latter is the common wintering loon of San Francisco Bay and neighboring inland bodies of salt water, where I have found the Pacific to be rare except in spring migration. The migration of the Pacific is a month later than that of the Red-throat. It appears that the bulk of Pacific Loons that traverse our coast may winter to the south of San Francisco Bay, possibly south of California. The Red-throated is locally the most common winter resident of the family.

*Gavia stellata*. Red-throated Loon. Abundant winter visitant; most of them leave in March. Capture of no. 248, a winter-plumaged female, May 22, 1921, on a salt-water ditch bordering the Black Point cut-off road, 1½ miles northeast of Ignacio, Marin County, presents an inland, also a seasonally late, record for this open water bird. It was not visibly disabled.

*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*. Eared Grebe. Abundant winter visitant to salt and brackish inland waters of the San Francisco Bay region, but scarcer along the open coast where it largely is replaced by the Horned Grebe (*Colymbus auritus*). Occasionally visits fresh water lakes in winter, as at 2 miles south of Glen Ellen, Sonoma County.

At least 30 pairs were nesting on Topaz Lake, Mono County, July 21, 1918 (adult collected); they also were breeding here July 6, 1923.

*Aechmophorus occidentalis*. Western Grebe. Numbers nested on Topaz Lake, Mono County, July 21, 1918, where sets of fresh eggs and an adult (no. 316) were collected July 6, 1923. Three seen on Sandborn Slough, near Butte Creek, 7 miles west of Pennington, Sutter County, June 13, 1925. Nests in numbers on Clear Lake, Lake County, where many were seen July 4, 1936, and July 16, 1928. Two to three hundred adults noted here on July 15, 1938, had only about twenty, one-third grown young with them. Several pairs nested on a deep pond 3 miles south of Los Baños, Merced County, June 10, 1926 (2 sets eggs). Occasional birds are to be seen on the open ocean in summer, as one off Bolinas, Marin County, June 20, 1920.

*Podilymbus podiceps podiceps*. Pied-billed Grebe. A completed nest and 2 birds were seen on a lake 2 miles south of Glen Ellen, Sonoma County, May 30, 1928. In 1925, a pair wintered on this lake, remaining until late April. They were then in summer plumage and were uttering courtship notes. A set of fresh eggs was taken 3 miles south of Los Baños, Merced County, June 10, 1928; found breeding commonly here in several years.—JAMES MORFITT, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, August 20, 1938.*

**Some Notes from Negit Island, Mono Lake, California.**—The writer, accompanied by H. S. Fuller, spent July 9 to 12, 1938, on Negit Island, Mono Lake, California. The island is about 400 acres in extent and is made up for the most part of very rough lava, but there are some areas composed of sandy soil covered with artemisia. No birds were taken, because of my belief that the island had been set aside as a bird preserve, but the following birds were seen repeatedly at close range.

*Larus californicus*. California Gull. The Mono Lake colony of gulls is now confined entirely to Negit Island, but formerly some birds nested on the adjoining Paoha Island (Dawson, *Birds of California*, vol. 3, 1923, p. 1406). We estimated that the gulls numbered approximately 3000 adults, and we succeeded in banding 510 of the then well-grown young. It might be interesting to add that on July 11 the writer was struck on the parietal region of the head by a gull swooping down from the rear; a deep scalp wound resulted. The gull was killed by the blow and an autopsy revealed a broken lower mandible, dislocated cervical vertebra, and extensive subcutaneous hemorrhage on neck, breast and belly. The skin is now in my collection (male no. 315). We were brushed several times by the gulls' wings when they dove on us, but this was the only accident. The young birds had been fed on insects and fly larvae, as well as some trout, which must have been obtained from quite a distance.

*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*. Eared Grebe. Both Dawson (*op. cit.*, p. 2052, and W. K. Fisher, *Condor*, vol. 4, 1902, p. 11) observed birds of this species in the region. We found them numerous around Paoha Island, but none was seen about Negit Island.

*Phalacrocorax auritus*. Cormorant. Six cormorants, which we took to be Farallon Cormorants (*P. a. albociliatus*), were seen flying over the lake on the evening of July 10.

*Steganopus tricolor*. Wilson Phalarope. One was seen near the western shore of the lake on July 9, and another at close range from Negit Island on July 11.

*Tachycineta thalassina lepida*. Violet-green Swallow. Great numbers of this swallow were nesting on the island in cracks between the loose rocks which make up the steep volcanic rubble heaps.

Say Phoebes (*Sayornis saya*), White-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys*), Sage Sparrows (*Amphispiza nevadensis nevadensis*), California Linnets (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*), and Rock Wrens (*Salpinctes obsoletus obsoletus*) were seen on Negit Island. Both adults and young of these species were noted.—WALTER F. NICHOLS, *Pasadena, California, September 4, 1938.*

**A New Race of Becard from Northeastern Mexico.**—The series of becards of the species *Platyparis aglaiae* in the British Museum is probably unequalled in any institution in the world. While at the British Museum in the summer of 1938, the writer devoted some time to an attempt to work out the characters of the species in northeastern and eastern Mexico. At the time Ridgway wrote part 4 of the *Birds of North and Middle America*, certain material then in American museums either was not available to him or else was overlooked, for, subsequent to arriving at certain conclusions at the British Museum, I have found ample confirmatory material in America which had been collected prior to the publication of part 4 in 1907. The northeastern race, the largest of the species, is here named as

*Platyparis aglaiae gravis*, new subspecies

*Type*.—Adult male, no. 435419, United States National Museum; Alta Mira, Tamaulipas, Mexico; February 11, 1895; collected by F. B. Armstrong.

*Subspecific characters*.—Largest of the races of *Platyparis aglaiae*. Compared with *Platyparis aglaiae aglaiae* of the highlands of central Vera Cruz and northern Oaxaca, size decidedly larger throughout; males very similar in coloration, that is, with sharp demarcation between the black head and gray