

are more highly colored, more extensively marked, and generally brighter. As the work was very exhausting, both from the hard traveling in the marsh and from the intense heat, we did not return until May 25 and then only because of some empty nests that had shown good prospects. Some of these turned out to be the nests of Florida Gallinules, but on May 26, after searching all morning, we discovered another rail's nest with six slightly incubated eggs. This was the best built nest so far found."

*Gelochelidon nilotica aranea*. Gull-billed Tern. These birds were found by the museum's representatives to be common in April and were observed feeding over fields as far west as Westmorland, south to Brawley and east to Calipatria. Those collected were taken in late afternoon on April 11 and 12, 1940, as they were returning from their feeding grounds to the Salton Sea. Their stomachs were filled with grasshoppers. Bernard Bailey, of the museum staff, reported: "On April 11, I discovered a 'pass' where these birds were flying toward Salton Sea. I arrived at this point at 5 p.m. when the birds were already passing by. On the 12th, I arrived at 4:50, but no birds were seen until 5:12. From then until 6:20, birds passed over at frequent intervals, after which none were seen. A total of 194 birds flew during this time over a 'pass' not over 300 yards wide. On this night the birds did not seem to me to be nearly as numerous as on the previous evening, when the flight ended at 6:45 p.m. I believe the numbers on April 11 would have been between 450 and 500, had they been counted as they were on the 12th."

*Hydroprogne caspia imperator*. Caspian Tern. One of these birds was seen by Bailey on April 13, 1940, and one by Lewis W. Walker, also of the museum staff, on April 18. Five or six pairs were said by Luther Goldman to nest on one of the islands in Salton Sea.

*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii hueyi*. Desert Poor-will. A nest believed to be of this form, with newly hatched young, was found on May 11, 1940, by Messrs. Sechrist and Heaton. It was on a bare spot under a small bush, in very rocky ground near the eastern end of the Salton Sea. It was discovered by flushing the parent bird, and is apparently the first recorded nesting of the Desert Poor-will.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, July 19, 1940*.

**Lark Bunting in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, California.**—Records of the occurrence of the Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) in this vicinity are so few that it was with great interest that I examined at close range a flock of fully thirty on February 25, 1940, between Winchester and Elsinore in Riverside County. Males and females were present in about equal numbers. On March 3, 1940, Lark Buntings were abundant between Amboy and Ludlow in San Bernardino County and the females seemed to outnumber the males.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, March 11, 1940*.

**An Observation on the Feeding of the Southern Bald Eagle.**—That bald eagles feed on waterfowl and seabirds is well known. A note entitled "More about Hawks" by A. Brazier Howell (Condor, vol. 32, 1930, p. 157) presents the author's conviction that raptorial birds usually capture more sick than healthy birds. In the light of this statement, the following note may be of interest.

On March 1, 1939, in company with Henry Isham, I spent about two hours watching the activities of a family of Southern Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus*) on and around the partially ice-covered surface of Baldwin Lake, at an altitude of 6,674 feet in the San Bernardino Mountains, California. We watched the birds from the road with powerful binoculars. The lake is perhaps a mile long by half a mile wide and the portion nearest to us comprised an ice-locked patch of open water several hundred square yards in area, where there were about twenty ducks and approximately twice that number of Coots (*Fulica americana americana*).

Our attention was first attracted to an adult eagle sitting on the snow-covered ice. Examining the bird through the binoculars, we found that it was eating a coot. It continued to feed for some minutes, then flew to a dead tree across the lake where two immature eagles were perched. One took off and glided toward a flock of coots that had left the open water and were meandering about on the ice. As the young eagle approached, the coots scattered wildly. One of these the eagle chose and as the luckless bird taxied for a takeoff, the talons of the eagle reached down, clutching it near the middle of the back. The coot raised its head, stretching its neck to full length in a last convulsion, then its feebly waving feet and head hung down limply. The eagle soared on for perhaps fifty yards, then alighted gracefully on the ice. For approximately five minutes it sat over its kill, appearing simply to inspect it without eating. It then flew back to the tree, without its prey, and alighted near the other two birds.

Flying toward the open water five minutes later, the adult eagle was followed at two-minute intervals by the young birds. They all circled between twenty and fifty feet above the ducks and coots

on the water, which, strangely enough, apparently paid no attention to them. However, the eagles made no more attacks on the waterfowl while we were there.

The ice was strewn for several hundred yards around the central pond with the remains of ducks and coots. Through the glasses we counted 130 individual patches of feathers, some of which, because of their lighter appearance, we assumed to be duck feathers. Along the leeward edge of the pool lay a windrow of either feathers, or dead birds, perhaps both, which we estimated to be over a foot wide by twenty-five feet long.

On a small patch of open water near the road, where the lake curves away to the west of the portion just described, we found a number of dead coots floating close to the shore. We counted fifty and there were many more. Ten of these birds I picked up and examined carefully, but none showed signs of violent death. There were no marks on them, thus indicating that they had died of causes other than the eagles.

In spite of the fact that we had seen an eagle kill a coot, the evidence of the dead birds made us wonder if perhaps many of the patches seen on the ice and around the edges of the ice-locked pool were not the remains of birds which had died like the birds near the shore, and had later been partly eaten by the reputedly scavenger eagles.—KARL W. KENYON, *Pomona College, Claremont, California, April 25, 1940.*

**Notes from San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties.**—The paucity of California records of the Black Pigeon Hawk, *Falco columbarius suckleyi*, warrants the recording of two specimens from Santa Barbara County that are now in the collections of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History. One is an immature male taken by W. G. Abbott on April 6, 1932, in the city of Santa Barbara (no. 1863); the other a female taken in Montecito, about four miles east of Santa Barbara on January 25, 1940 (no. 3757). The latter specimen was observed chasing small birds through the trees by Mr. Hugh P. Dearing. When dissected, the stomach contained a few feathers and the tarsus and toes of *Passerculus sandwichensis* subsp.

On July 19, 1939, Mr. W. H. James reported a Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata fasciata*) nesting on the William R. Dickinson estate in Hope Ranch Park, which is about three and one-half miles west of Santa Barbara. The writer and an assistant immediately went to examine the nest. It was situated in a live oak. The tree was a very large one and the nest was about forty-five feet from the ground. It contained a young bird approximately two days old. Several days later, this nest was again visited, but the young bird had been destroyed, part of a wing still being in the nest.

A male Western White-winged Dove (*Melopelia asiatica mearnsi*) was taken on October 19, 1939, at Dune Lakes near Oceano, San Luis Obispo County. Although this species occurs along the Colorado River in the extreme southern part of the state, its presence so far north is rare. The specimen is no. 3740 in the collection of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.

Although the Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) has been recorded a number of times from California, it is uncommon enough to be mentioned. An immature male was taken on October 26, 1939, at Dune Lakes, San Luis Obispo County. The specimen is now no. 3743 in the collection of the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History.—EGMONT Z. RETT, *Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, Santa Barbara, California, July 8, 1940.*

**A Record of the Eastern Mockingbird in British Columbia.**—It may be of interest to record the taking of a Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*) in British Columbia at Duncan, Vancouver Island, on January 20, 1940. The bird was under observation for several days and was noted to be feeding on discarded apples and holly berries. Although its feeding habits were dissimilar, it was first thought to be an albinistic Townsend Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*). When recognized after collection, the skin was sent to Major Allan Brooks, who tentatively determined it to be the eastern form, *M. p. polyglottos* (skin now in his collection). This was confirmed by Dr. Alden H. Miller of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. There is one previous record for the species on Vancouver Island reported by Racey (*Can. Field Nat.*, vol. 47, 1933, p. 159). The race to which this bird belonged was not determined inasmuch as it was not collected.—DENNIS ASHBY, *Duncan, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, May 14, 1940.*

**Winter Record of Burrowing Owl in Northern California.**—On January 20, 1940, while I was making observations on waterfowl in the vicinity of Lower Klamath Lake, California, a Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia hypugaea*) was seen near the northwest corner of the lake. When disturbed, the owl flew away, giving a single typical call, and disappeared behind a ridge. Examination of the burrow where it had been revealed only one old pellet and several whitish liquid fecal splashes. The pellet contained mouse hair and remnants of several ground beetles.—CLARENCE A. SOOTER, *Bureau of Biological Survey, Burns, Oregon, June 15, 1940.*