

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Methods of Grasping and Carrying Prey.—The note by Allen (Auk, 56, 1939:476-77) entitled "Left-handedness in the Carolina Paroquet" stimulated the writer to make similar observations on birds in the vicinity of the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon. Because of an opportunity to witness the manner in which a number of hawks and owls grasped and carried their prey, I decided to record and tabulate the data to determine whether there was a preference in the manner of holding the victim.

Species	Right Beak	Left foot	Both foot	Both feet	Remarks
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	....	....	....	1	Carried gadwall (female) short distance.
<i>Circus hudsonius</i>	....	9	6	....	One carried portion of rabbit (carrion) in right foot. Other prey were mice.
<i>Accipiter velox</i>	....	1	....	....	English Sparrow.
<i>Buteo borealis</i>	....	6	5	4	One observed to catch two mice with left foot. One carried bull snake, one a pheasant, one a ground squirrel and one a mouse in both feet. Other prey were mice.
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	....	5	8	1	One mouse grasped in both feet after hawk was forced to fly from perch a number of times. One held mouse under left foot when perched and when flying carried it in beak and then grasped in right foot. One had juvenal coot, two a duckling. One duckling grasped in both feet after hawk forced to fly from several perches. One mouse carried in beak a short distance before being grasped by left foot during flight. One carried a duck in both feet.
<i>Buteo lagopus s. johannis</i>	....	....	2	....	Mice taken. One observed caught in the same foot.
<i>Falco sparverius</i>	1	3	4	....	Insects and mice taken chiefly. One had a beetle, two a mouse and one had portion of recently killed blackbird in left foot. One had a grasshopper in its beak.
<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	....	....	....	1	Carrying live garter snake.
<i>Asio flammeus</i>	2	....	....	....	Carrying mouse.
TOTALS	3	24	25	7	

Observations were made during the period from April 6, 1940, to November 2, 1943. The data gathered on these birds show that each foot is used by hawks about the same number of times. This would indicate that if individual birds of prey are either right- or left-footed, the percentage is not decidedly in favor of either foot. However, it should not be inferred that the individuals observed were necessarily predominantly right- or left-footed or that there was no preference in foot use by each individual bird. Information on the latter point would necessitate detailed observations on marked or caged individuals.—CLARENCE A. SOOTER, *United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Frenchglen, Oregon, December 16, 1943.*

Aerial Insect Feeding by the California Gull.—For two consecutive years, concentrations of California Gulls (*Larus californicus*) have been noted catching crickets in flight. The first instances were noted between August 15 and August 20, 1942, when several gulls were seen hawking over the Richmond Shipyard at Richmond, Contra Costa County, California, late in the evening. On August 23 about twenty gulls were seen. From their actions it was obvious that they were catching insects in flight but, as they flew fifty to one hundred feet from the ground, the identity of their prey could not be ascertained. On succeeding days the gulls became more numerous, appearing about dusk and remaining until a half hour after dark. On September 9 fully 100 gulls were present and these flew low enough for some to be identified as *Larus californicus*. All appeared to be the same species, though identification was difficult in the darkness. The insects upon which they fed could be seen as black dots, moving swiftly and steadily either horizontally or obliquely. Many came to the bright lights on the ground and were identified as the common black cricket, *Gryllus assimilis*. Seemingly the brilliant lights of the shipyard attracted the crickets while engaged in a nuptial flight from a large surrounding area. The flight, both of gulls and crickets, reached its peak on September 11 when about 400 gulls were seen. The following day dead crickets were abundant where they had been stepped on or run over by vehicles. The cricket swarm had appreciably decreased on September 13; about 50 gulls were seen. For several days following, four to six gulls were seen hawking over the shipyards in the evenings, apparently catching crickets, although no crickets were seen on the ground or in flight.

In early June, 1943, a minor flight of *Gryllus* was noted, unaccompanied by gulls; California Gulls normally are absent from the region in spring.

On September 3, 1943, five gulls were noted hawking over the shipyard in the dusk. As in the previous year, no insects could be seen from the ground. The number of gulls steadily increased, until September 16, when an estimated 400 were present. The weather on the 16th, 17th and 18th was unusually warm. About the same number of gulls was present on these three days. Crickets were seen in abundance, and other insects as well. Moths, crane flies and water beetles were most common. Two large water bugs (Belostombidae) were also noted. The black crickets, however, outnumbered all other insects and the gulls seemed to be feeding on them exclusively. A marked decrease in the number of gulls was apparent on September 19. Only about twenty were seen on the 21st. Two or three were seen every evening for a week thereafter, but no crickets were seen. The hawking of the gulls consisted of a steady flight at moderate speed, seemingly accomplished by movements principally of the terminal part of the wings. They occasionally swerved to left or right or dipped down to catch an insect, but most captures were made with an upward swoop followed by a return to the original flight level. Their flight continued long after complete darkness had fallen. The insects were doubtless made visible to them by the many brilliant lights of the shipyard. The gulls hunted in absolute silence.—WALTER W. DALQUEST, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, January 9, 1944.*

Notes on Some Birds Taken in Utah.—While conducting field work at St. George in southern Utah from October 5 to 25, 1937, fifty-three species and subspecies were collected. The following species appear to merit especial attention. One has seldom been reported whereas two are new additions to the State list.

Sialia mexicana occidentalis. Western Bluebird. There are few records of this bluebird from western and central Utah. A single male was taken from a flock of seven *Sialia mexicana bairdi*, the breeding form in Utah, on October 21, 1937, at Kanab, Utah. One male *S. m. occidentalis* was obtained 19 miles south of Moab, Utah (Behle, *Wilson Bull.*, 3, 1941:183).

Vermivora celata lutescens. Lutescent Orange-crowned Warbler. A Lutescent Warbler taken at St. George, Utah, on October 12, 1937, constitutes the first record for the State. The author reported *Vermivora celata celata* as a fall migrant in northeastern Utah and *Vermivora celata orestera* as the breeding form in the mountains of the Uinta Basin (Twomey, *Ann. Carnegie Mus.*, 28, 1942:341-490).

Anthus rubescens pacificus. Western Pipit. A male of this species was collected from a flock of twenty *Anthus rubescens alticola*, fifteen miles southeast of St. George, Utah, on October 19, 1937. This straggler is the first record of the Western Pipit for Utah.

Zonotrichia leucophrys oriantha. Oregon White-crowned Sparrow. Seventeen specimens from the Uinta Basin, Utah (Jensen; Paradise Park, Uinta Mountains; Bald Mountains; Heber), were identified as *Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys* (Twomey, *loc. cit.*). Since collecting a series of topotypical specimens of *Zonotrichia l. oriantha* from Barley Camp in the Warner Mountains, fourteen miles southwest of Adel, Oregon, the birds from the Uinta Basin have been found to be *Z. l. oriantha*. A comparison of measurements with breeding specimens of the eastern race failed to show any significant differences.

The Uinta specimens are identical with topotypical specimens of *oriantha* in being much paler (more grayish tan) over the dorsal surface, particularly the rump, back and nape, than the eastern race, *leucophrys*. This paleness is also pronounced over the breast and flanks. The rump of the Uinta birds has an olive shade that distinguishes them slightly from *oriantha* and *leucophrys*. The Uinta specimens must, therefore, be regarded as belonging to the western race, *Z. l. oriantha*. Miller (Condor, 43, 1941:262) in a recent study of this group makes the following statements about this race: "There seem to be good grounds for recognizing the race [*Z. l. oriantha*] if all eastern materials is as dark-colored as the specimens we have at hand. Close comparison of groups of breeding birds from the Cascades, Sierra Nevada, and Willowa Mountains, Oregon, and Rocky Mountains of Wyoming and Utah, shows no differences between western populations."—ARTHUR C. TWOMEY, *Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, December 14, 1943.*

California Cuckoo Collected in Eastern Oregon.—In the "Birds of Oregon" (Gabrielson and Jewett, 1940:329-330), the California Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*) is reported as uncommon in eastern Oregon, only three records being available at the time this book was published. Bendire first recorded cuckoos in 1876 as nesting along the Snake River, on the Oregon side. Since then cuckoos were recorded in 1896 and 1910 in southeastern Oregon.