

island has seldom been visited by biologists, and all published accounts of the avifauna record definitely only a few species of pelagic or aquatic birds. In recent years the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, La Jolla, California, has undertaken a biogeographical survey of Clipperton Island, and detailed reports on its biota will be published in the future. The present brief note records an instance of some interest to ornithologists.

From October 21 to 26, 1956, Wayne Baldwin, Museum Zoologist of the University of California, Los Angeles, visited Clipperton Island with a party from the Scripps Institution to make ichthyological collections. During his stay Mr. Baldwin obtained three specimens of land birds which he brought back preserved in formalin. He reported that small land birds were seen frequently on the island, which has now acquired considerable vegetation in the form of vines and various annuals as well as coconut palms. The birds were subsequently prepared as study skins and are in the Dickey Collection, University of California, Los Angeles.

The three birds are an unsexed Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*), a male Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*), and a female Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*). Subspecific identification of the latter is somewhat uncertain as formalin preservation may have affected plumage color, but the bird appears to represent the breeding population of the eastern United States (*P. r. rubra*). The two warblers are also species that breed principally in eastern North America. All three birds had double-layered skulls, and the Bay-breasted Warbler is certainly an adult as it has considerable deep chestnut coloring on the flanks. All three species are migrants and winter residents in Central and South America, but the presence of these "eastern" species (and other land birds) so far out in the Pacific is noteworthy. Although only sea birds are known to nest on Clipperton Island, it is possible that some species of land birds may become established as residents if suitable vegetation persists.—THOMAS R. HOWELL, *Department of Zoology, University of California, Los Angeles, California, August 26, 1958.*

Flamingo in a Southern California Slough.—At 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on July 22 and on August 18, 1958, an American Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) was seen in the shallows of the brackish water slough near the Sunset Beach Gun Club, one mile south of Los Patos (just south of Sunset Beach), Orange County, California. The solitary individual undoubtedly found its way to this location from either the Hollywood racetrack ponds, 25 miles away, or from one of several other possible domestically maintained flocks. This conspicuous bird will undoubtedly be viewed by other observers. This record is offered as a basis for future reference and to establish information about the ability of a flamingo to subsist on native fauna under natural conditions in California.

Although the bird was less than 100 yards from a heavily traveled highway (U.S. Highway 101 or Cabrillo Highway) its behavior indicated complete composure during all sightings. During the morning it was resting in the pose customary for this species—head nestled over the back and standing on one leg. In the afternoon the bird was actively feeding in the shallow water (0-3 inches). Associated with the flamingo in the afternoon feeding foray were several California and Ring-billed gulls, while a flock of Snowy Plovers rested on the adjacent sand flat.—ANDREAS B. RECHNITZER, *United States Navy Electronics Laboratory, San Diego, California, July 23, 1958.*

Subspecific Status of *Atlapetes brunnei-nucha* in South America.—In the series of some 400 skins assembled for my revisionary study of the Chestnut-capped Brush-finch, *Atlapetes brunnei-nucha* (Condor, 56, 1954:129-138) there were only five specimens from Perú. The characters of the Peruvian population of this species are of major importance, since Perú is the type locality of *Arremon frontalis* Tschudi, the name I revived for the population of *Atlapetes brunnei-nucha* of South America and eastern Panamá. I commented (*op. cit.*:136) on certain apparent color trends within South America, particularly noting certain peculiarities of the small Peruvian series.

Traylor (*Fieldiana: Zoology*, 35, 1958:137) has recently discussed the characters by which I distinguished *A. b. frontalis* from *A. b. brunnei-nucha* (Lafresnaye) of eastern México. On the basis of a comparison of "a long series from Vera Cruz of *brunnei-nucha*" and Peruvian material consisting of "a good series of fresh material from Marcapata, Cuzco, and . . . two males from Huánuco" (in all, 10 Peruvian specimens), Traylor claimed that the only character which could be used to distinguish the two forms was the color of the border of the crown (deeper yellow in *frontalis*). He stated that there are no differences in bill length; I wrote "bill averaging longer" in *frontalis*, and my table of measure-

ments, based on 35 specimens of *brunnei-nucha* and 132 of *frontalis*, clearly shows that the bill of the latter race averages longer.

Traylor reported that he could see no correlation between geography and the variation in relative amount of white on the underparts. I found this surprising, since this had seemed to me to be the most striking difference between *brunnei-nucha* and *frontalis*. Recalling that I had noted that the Peruvian examples of *frontalis* that I had seen averaged grayer below than those from elsewhere in South America, the possibility occurred to me that study of additional Peruvian specimens might indicate that the name *frontalis* would have to be restricted to the Peruvian population and *xanthogenys* Cabanis (type locality Caracas, Venezuela) revived for the birds of Venezuela, Colombia, eastern Panamá, and Ecuador. Mr. Traylor was good enough to send for my examination the Chicago Natural History Museum's entire South American series (18 specimens) of this species.

Examination of the Peruvian series described by Traylor showed that in evaluating the individual variation in amount of white on the underparts he was misled by the fact that no less than 5 of his 10 Peruvian specimens are young birds which still bear on the underparts many of the grayish-olive feathers of the juvenal plumage. Adults from Perú bear out my original statement (Parkes, *op. cit.*: 136): "Even the grayest of the Peruvian specimens has a greater extent of white ventrally than any Mexican specimen of *A. b. brunnei-nucha*." Extreme examples of the latter race (such as Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist. no. 41042, Jalapa, Veracruz) may have the ventral white restricted to a small, poorly-defined dirty white spot on the lower abdomen.

If the only South American populations of *Atlapetes brunnei-nucha* were those of coastal Venezuela and Perú, there would be no hesitation in recognizing the former as a separate subspecies under the name *xanthogenys* Cabanis. Venezuelan examples are whiter below than Peruvian and have bills which are longer and more slender. The Peruvian specimens are dorsally of a deeper, more golden green, and tend to have a slight brownish wash on the outer margins of the remiges. In the large series examined from Colombia and Ecuador, however, are examples which completely bridge all of these differences, and no plausible geographic separation can be defined. Examination of the new material from the Chicago Natural History Museum supports my original conclusion that all of the South American populations of *Atlapetes brunnei-nucha* (except *inornatus* and *allinornatus*, isolated races which lack the pectoral band) are best considered as belonging to a single somewhat variable subspecies to which the name *frontalis* Tschudi may be applied.—KENNETH C. PARKES, *Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, August 11, 1958.*

Starlings Nesting in Central California.—On May 13, 1958, adult European Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were observed feeding young at an abandoned woodpecker hole in a blue oak (*Quercus douglasii*) in the Palo Prieta Canyon, seven miles east of Shandon, San Luis Obispo County, California. On May 26 this nest site was revisited at which time six young starlings were collected from the nest; two of these were prepared as scientific study skins.

The lower five inches of the nest cavity was filled with oak bark fibers. This nesting material was moist, warm, and contained many maggots of a species of fly. The young when taken were well developed, being able to hop about but not to fly. Grasshoppers were fed to the young exclusively while they were under observation.—EBEN McMILLAN, *Cholame, California, July 21, 1958.*

Red-tailed Hawk Killing a Lamb.—Observations of hawks killing domestic lambs are so unusual it seems worthwhile to report a recent case involving a Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*). The incident occurred in Humboldt County, California, on the Joseph Russ sheep ranch, located about five miles south of Capetown and approximately three miles from the coast.

On January 30, 1958, Predatory Animal Hunter, Darrel Cussins, left the Russ Ranch at 7:00 a.m. with two hounds to hunt bobcats. About three miles southeast of the ranch house in the high country on open grassland, he saw a Red-tailed Hawk eating on a dead lamb. As Darrel approached, the hawk picked up the remains of the small lamb and flew off down the hill with it. Darrel proceeded on up the mountain with his dogs. On his return approximately one hour later, he stopped to look over the sheep to see if there were any more dead lambs. About 200 yards below him he saw a Red-tailed Hawk dive several times at a newborn lamb. The ewe would butt at the hawk as the hawk would try to hit the lamb. He then saw the hawk hit the lamb knocking it to the ground. It did not get up. While all of this was taking place Darrel was trying to get a shot at the hawk with his 25-20 rifle, but he was