

Bird Notes from Placer County, Cal.

VARIED Thrush (*Hesperocichla nevada*). In the *Oologist* for January, 1901, Wm. L. Atkinson notes the occurrence and disposition of this bird as he finds it in Santa Clara, but the habits of the birds here are so different that I give my notes by way of comparison. These birds arrive here about the end of October and seeking the seclusion of the dark, heavily wooded canyons or hillsides, are rarely seen outside of them. I have occasionally seen and secured specimens in the alders or brush along water-courses but have never found them within 1500 yards of dwellings. In the wooded districts they may be found in small bands of six or more, finding their insect food usually among the fallen leaves and twigs. Later on in the spring they resort to the brushy side hills for manzanita blossoms and at such times leave their insect diet. Even in the darkest canyons they are shy and appear unused to the sight of human beings, peering at them curiously and flying away with harsh, mournful cries as if they were outcasts in a land of plenty. Their vocabulary is much less varied and not as musical as that of the Western Robin. The latest date I have recorded a specimen of the Varied Thrush is on March 23 of this year, when they became scarce and soon left.

California Thrasher. Having read a good deal about the vocal powers of *Harporhynchus redivivus*, with little in commendation of the bird's ability to imitate the songs of other birds, I would like to pronounce a few words in his favor. Though he cannot compete with *Mimus polyglottos* he, in a more fragmentary manner, does imitate parts of other birds' songs. Audubon says that when these birds are happy they sing at their best and although I have infrequently heard them singing in light snowstorms, still the sunny days of spring are the time to hear them. Among the common and most perfect

imitations of bird songs by the thrasher are "quare, quare, quare," the usual cawing note of *Aphelocoma californica*; the quirring note of *Sitta c. aculeata* and the cackling note of *Colaptes cafer*. Then at times I have heard the pleasant trill of *Chamæa fasciata*, imitated so perfectly that wrentits have replied to it similarly. The note of *Lophortyx c. vallicola* is imitated well, but for some reason very rarely, and the "kwee-kwee-kuk" of *Merula m. propinqua* makes one search the trees for the bird. The imitated notes are always woven into the thrasher's own song, for nearly every thrasher has an individual song or songs and the rapid succession of individual notes and imitated ones makes it difficult to separate and distinguish the one from the other, which may account partially for the few people who consider this bird to be an imitator.

American Pipit. The occurrence of *Anthus pensilvanicus* here is of very short duration, in the spring at least, for they arrived this year on February 26 and had passed on by March 21 and have not been seen since. Judging by their absence in previous years they are not very common in this section at any time, but on March 8 I secured an adult male out of a flock of 25 or more, after considerable trouble. They were feeding in summer-fallowed ground along the side of a small creek and kept flying ahead as we approached. They spent most of their time feeding in the bottom of the furrows, out of sight, usually walking rapidly. Their flight is undulatory and seemingly not strong.

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The *Wilson Bulletin* is now issued from Berwyn, Pa. and Frank L. Burns assumes editorial control. The *Bulletin* has grown into an excellent and substantial publication under the supervision of Professor Lynds Jones and if the announced policy of its new management is followed out, we bespeak for the magazine a still greater field of usefulness and influence.