

### California Pygmy Owl in Lake Co., Cal.

ABOUT 4 P. M. in the afternoon of Dec. 9, 1901, I secured a California pygmy owl (*Glaucidium gnoma californicum*) at Hasting's Ranch, Upper-Lake. The bird, a female, is the first of the species I have seen here. When out with my small collecting gun, a 28 bore, a few days before the 9th, I saw a couple of canvasback ducks in a pond near the northern end of Clear Lake.

Thinking I might find a canvasback or some mallards in the pond if I paid it another visit, I took my 10-bore and revisited the place on Dec. 9. Not a duck of any description was there. Coming out of the tules and into a fringe of white oaks growing on the hillside, I stood awhile looking around. A commotion among a flock of small birds in a mistletoe-covered oak attracted my attention.

Suddenly a bird flew through the tree and to the ground carrying along with it in its talons a sparrow or other small bird. Being quite close to the two I saw at once that the bird was a pygmy owl. It crouched over its prey with its face turned full in my direction, and we gazed at each other a few moments before I started to walk backwards to widen the distance between us. Unfortunately I had cartridges loaded with a heavy charge of No. 4 shot, but I raised my gun and awaited a change of position on the owl's part, fearing to damage its face if I fired at once.

After a little it flew off carrying the small bird and alighted in an oak, its flight being rapid and hawk-like and its long tail very noticeable as it flew. I tried a long shot,—too long in fact—and missed. The owl seemed more startled than frightened and contented itself with a quick flight into a larger tree, dropping its prey en route. I followed, and getting a little nearer than before brought the bird down. Upon skinning the specimen I found that the

large shot had done considerable damage.

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### Two Specimens of *Nyctala* From Marin County, California.

ON December 11, 1901 I received a box from Thos. Irving, game keeper at Point Reyes Station, about ten miles from here, containing, besides a beautifully-marked partially albino western robin, a fine specimen in the flesh of saw-whet owl (*Nyctala acadica*) which proved to be an adult female. I was greatly surprised at this take partly because this bird has been but seldom recorded from this state and then mostly from the higher ranges, and also because I have never heard any bird sounds that would correspond to the published description of the notes of this owl.

Since writing the above note I have received another specimen of *Nyctala acadica*, also a female, from the same party and locality, shot on Dec. 23. It is strange that two specimens should have been taken within a few days of each other when no former record has been made, nor the note of this bird heard or its presence even suspected in this county, as this species is not supposed to be a migrant. Both birds were fat, though the stomachs were empty. They had probably wandered in this direction in search of food, but in all likelihood from some not far distant locality.

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### The Elf Owl in California.

IT may interest California ornithologists to know that the National Museum possesses a specimen of the elf owl (*Micropallas whitneyi*) from California, the species being previously un-