

proved to be a female in well worn plumage; crop filled with fragments of aquatic insects.—FRANK S. DAGGETT, *Pasadena, Cal.*

**A Rare Land Bird Taken at Sea.**—November 13, 1901, while on *U. S. S. Pathfinder*, making the run from Nagasaki to Manila, I killed a female specimen of *Calliope kamtschatkensis* (*Gm.*) which had come aboard and was resting in the rigging. The position of ship at the time of capture was 127 degrees, 20 minutes E., 29 degrees, 40 minutes north. The bird was not very fat and not storm driven, as we had experienced only mild weather since leaving port. It was in all probability on its fall migration. The species occurs as a rare winter visitant to the Philippines, Grant having recorded several specimens from northern Luzon and Worcester having killed a single specimen in Mashate.—RICHARD MCGREGOR, *Manila, P. I.*

**Cryptoglaux acadica acadica in Placer County.**—February 7, 1902, while collecting near Bear River, I observed a small owl, apparently asleep, sitting on a fallen log. I had watched him for several minutes when with surprising quickness he flew from the log to a brush pile eight feet distant. Fearing I might lose him, I shot just as he alighted. He proved to be a saw-whet owl, and lying near him was a mouse still struggling. Evidently Mr. Owl was sleeping with one eye open. This is the only specimen I have met with in this county.

Pigmy owls (*Glaucidium g. californicum*) are occasionally seen here. I shot one on March 24th just at dusk. It flew from a cypress where a member of linnets were going to roost. ERNEST ADAMS, *Clipper Gap, Cal.*

**Late Nesting of Arkansas Goldfinch.**—On November 22, 1900, I found the nest of an Arkansas goldfinch among the leafless branches of a boxelder. At first glance I thought it was a nest of the previous summer but closer examination showed the tail of the sitting bird sticking over the edge. The nest contained a clutch of four fresh eggs. Being interested in a case of such unusual nesting I kept close watch of the little domicile. All went well for a week when several days of hard rains wrecked the nest. I noticed no further attempt on the part of the parent birds to resume their late housekeeping.—JOHN M. MILLER, *Partier, Cal.*

**The Snowflake and Other Unusual Birds at Marysville.**—In the winter of 1872 or 1873, at Marysville, during the memorable snowstorm, when snow was six inches deep, a flock of forty or fifty snowflakes (*Passerina nivalis*) stayed fearlessly two or three days on the steamboat landing at the foot of D street, and caused much comment. They were mentioned in the local column of the *Appeal* by someone who gave their latin name. I have not heretofore mentioned their occurrence because I did not get a specimen, and was not positive of the form or species. Although nearly the same list of species can be found in Central California every winter, that was a notable exception. At the same locality in the comparatively cold winter of 1877-78 the northern shrike (*Lanius borealis*) was quite common. I have not seen it at any other time in this state. Fine examples of the so-called hybrid flicker were very common there that winter, and their presence was apparently due to cold weather, for I have scarcely seen one like them since that time. I sent a large fine series to the Smithsonian where, Mr. Ridgway told me, as I remember, they were mounted and placed on exhibition.

The resident species remained and included the mockingbird, Pacific yellow-throat, Lawrence goldfinch, Parkman wren, and many other species. I doubt if the residents had a particle of the migratory instinct. Perhaps they never had any. During snowstorms at Murphys I have been unable to ascertain that the storms drove the residents away from the locality. I once saw a fine male Anna hummingbird feeding in manzanita (*Arctostaphylos*) on the mountain side above Murphys when the ground was covered with snow. Snowstorms seldom occur in the valleys or foothills, and any snow that falls is certain to melt in a day or less.—LYMAN BELDING, *Stockton, Cal.*

**Peculiar Habits of a Black Phoebe.**—For six years or more, I am told, a phoebe (*Sayornis n. semiatra*) has lived alone at this place and roosted, summer and winter on a branch of a rosebush under a porch. This year from January to June it could be found any night on its perch and seemed no wise disturbed by my frequent visits. In June the rosebush was torn down and for three weeks I could find no trace of the bird. Then it reappeared, alone, and ever since has divided its time between the house and barn. Why has it remained so long unmated? In former years they nested here regularly but the nearest nest this summer was over a mile from here.—ERNEST ADAMS, *Clipper Gap, Cal.*

**Destruction of Birds' Eggs: A Query.**—I have been greatly puzzled at the wholesale destruction of birds' eggs here, and vigilant watch during the nesting period failed to find the culprits. Early in the season I found shells of three black-headed grosbeak's eggs in a road, at least three yards from any suitable nesting place. The contents of the eggs had been removed through irregular holes about three-sixteenths of an inch in diameter. A few days later eggs of

other birds were found mutilated in this way.

It was my desire to rear a number of nestlings for a small aviary, but of the scores of nests I had to select from, less than a dozen remained undisturbed until the young were hatched. Only nests in and about the orchard were molested, and here I have examined over a hundred shells; a few were broken but most of them had a small jagged hole in the side. Jays and shrikes never venture about the house. A bird must do the work; or if not, what? ERNEST ADAMS, *Clipper Gap, Cal.*

**Mossy Murres.**—During the summer one often finds on Monterey Bay solitary murres (*Uria californica*) which have not been able to join the hordes of their kind at the regular breeding grounds on the Farallone Islands or elsewhere. Specimens obtained often proved to be remarkably emaciated and so weak as to be unable to fly. Perhaps a failure to properly preen themselves accounts for a greenish or brownish green accretion which forms a zone across the breast and along the sides of the body just at and a little below the water-line. One bird in particular which washed ashore near the Hopkins Laboratory last year had a broad oil green band across the breast. Microscopic examination showed the feathers of this region to be closely covered by attached masses of diatoms. I sent some of these feathers to Dr. George C. Whipple of New York, who identified the prevailing species of diatom as *Fragilaria pacifica* Grum., with some *Meridion circulare*, both of which are figured in Wolle's "Diatomaceæ of North America." The same or similar plants may be found on any floating body such as driftwood, or on piling. The birds with this conspicuous discoloration across the white under surface are sometimes unable to leave the water, the feathers having soaked through, and the whole bird become almost water-logged. These individuals may have become decrepit from old age, or accidentally disabled in some way.—JOSEPH GRINNELL.

**The Hummingbirds of Escondido and Vicinity.**—Of all the hummingbirds of this locality the black-chinned (*alexandri*) is by far the most common. The first year I collected here the hummers were very common. A small citrus nursery not far from one place seemed to abound with them, nearly all being of the black-chinned variety. Here they build their nests in the young trees, using willow, cotton, and the down from the young sycamore leaves for material. It would be hard to tell how many nests were built and occupied, but at least twenty or more were found containing eggs and young. But where have they gone?

In 1900 there was hardly a nest built in this nursery. My notes show that I observed but two nests of this species during that season, the first one being found May 2, containing one fresh egg, which I supposed hatched with the second egg in time. Two nice sets of Anna hummers were preserved during that season, being taken in May. The composition of the nests was quite different from that of the black-chinned, consisting of withered leaves and feathers, all being covered with the usual amount of spider web. These were placed in oaks well up on the hill side.

I found but four nests of the black-chinned and one of the Anna. I have failed to find this family of birds breeding here as early as recorded further north, my earliest record being that of the Anna just mentioned which was found on March 17, containing two young about one-half grown. I have noticed but one specimen of the rufous hummer here. It was a male late in the summer of 1900, so I have no reason to believe they breed here. To sum up I have recorded two species breeding, black-chinned and Anna together with one probably migratory, namely, the rufous. The Allen variety is found breeding about twenty miles further inland in the pine belt, a friend of mine having found a nest containing two eggs which he collected with one of the parent birds.—NELSON CARPENTER, *Escondido, Cal.*

**Confirmation of a Record.**—In my Sur River article in the last CONDOR (Vol. IV, p. 125), doubt was expressed as to the proper identity of certain species previously attributed to the region in a published paper by Milton S. Ray. In the case of "*Ammodramus savannarum perallidus*" (= *Ammodramus savannarum bimaculatus*) Mr. Ray has submitted for re-identification the specimen which he secured, thus substantiating his record. A seacoast breeding station for this species seems exceptional.—J. GRINNELL.

**Further Notes on the Pine Siskin** —On September 2, I found two nests of *Spinus pinus* containing newly hatched young. As with the majority of birds in this country, it would be difficult to call these second or third sets, as nesting seems to be a continuous performance, and indulged in at any time during the season that a pair of birds happen to feel like it.—J. H. BOWLES, *Tacoma, Wash.*

**Query.**—Can any of the readers of THE CONDOR give me any information as to best places to go on the Alaskan coast for the purpose of photographing colonies of seabirds?—E. R. WARREN, *Colorado Springs, Col.*