

*Canachites franklini*. Franklin Grouse. Not common resident of the heavily timbered sections. An adult female examined October 10, 1915.

*Aquila chrysaetos*. Golden Eagle. Rare. An adult male examined, taken October 11, 1915.

*Otus asio macfarlanei*. Macfarlane Screech Owl. Rare resident. A specimen in the gray phase examined January 18, 1916. It was taken in a pigeon coop within the city limits, having forced its way into the coop and killed and partly devoured a pigeon when taken.

*Regulus calendula*. Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Common in spring in fir thickets. Probably resident. Specimen taken April 20, 1915.

On December 9, 1915, I was surprised to hear faint notes of the Bluebird (*Sialia mexicana occidentalis?*) and discovered three individuals flying rather low over the housetops. Later I was told that three Bluebirds had spent two days, December 10 and 11, in and about a bird house in a pine tree in this city not far from where I had noticed them flying overhead. The weather being not far from zero, and with deep snow, this struck me as being an unusual record for Bluebirds in this vicinity.

During the extreme cold weather and deep snow prevailing from January 1 to 20 of this year, many small owls, particularly the Saw-whet (*Cryptoglaux acadicus*) and Screech Owls, took refuge in barns and outbuildings, and were attacking pigeons and chickens. In one instance a Saw-whet had killed and partly eaten a bantam chicken.—HENRY J. RUST, *Coeur d'Alene, Idaho*.

**Plumage of the Young Male Red-shafted Flicker.**—Near the Biological Station at Flat-head Lake, Montana, I found last summer a nest of the Red-shafted Flicker (*Colaptes cafer collaris*) containing six well grown young. In the process of banding these young, I noticed that one of the birds was already equipped with the red mustache marks, the feathers then just breaking the sheaths. In all the books in which I have searched for information on this subject the statement is made that young flickers lack the mustaches. This observation, however, indicates that in some individuals the young male has this mark, even in the nestling plumage.—ARETAS A. SAUNDERS, *New Haven, Connecticut*.

**Concerning Vernacular Names of *Passer domesticus*.**—In looking over THE CONDOR of January, 1916, I notice, in treating of a publication by Ernest Harold Baynes, that the reviewer, among other things, says: "The English Sparrow, or European Sparrow as Mr. Baynes calls it, apparently has no terrors for the author;" etc., etc. This brought back to me the thought that has often occurred to me before, why this unwelcome alien should be so persistently known as the "English" Sparrow. If the bird was originally brought over from England, one would not consider the name unfair, but England is a small spot on the map of Europe, and who knows from what country it was really introduced into North America?

I have found no record as to this; Chapman, in his "Handbook", states that it was "first introduced into the United States at Brooklyn, N. Y., in 1851 and 1852"; but from what country and by whom is not stated. I believe that I am not alone in the opinion that "House Sparrow" or "European Sparrow" would be far better, and more correct.—H. H. MITCHELL, *Provincial Museum, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada*.

**Auburn Canyon Wren: An Objection.**—Having often thought over just the point brought up by Dawson in the last CONDOR, page 33, I would like to offer a few opinions of my own; all in a most friendly spirit of discussion.

I do not believe that vernacular names should be governed by as strict rules of priority as are the scientific names, for it is well to have a loop-hole through which to crawl in case of a serious error, or, as in the case of the "Louisiana" Tanager, when subsequent alterations of political boundaries make the old name too misleading. I approve of the change to the name of Western Tanager, and I think it high time that some of the other misleading geographical names of birds were changed.

The case of *Catherpes m. punctulatus* is a different matter, however. The bird is dotted, although this character is not as noticeable as the prevailing color, of course. Uniformity in all things is desirable, and especially so in scientific matters. If we alter one English name to another that is slightly more appropriate, the whole *A. O. U. Check List* should be gone through and revised. Dotted Canyon Wren is no more offensive to

the discriminating mind and eye than is Dwarf Hermit Thrush, Summer Tanager and a hundred others in our avifauna, but I imagine there are few who would advise such sweeping changes.

By all means, let all who wish, call *Oceanodroma homochroa*, Coues Petrel, or call *Catherpes m. punctulatus*, Ridgway Canyon Wren. That is entirely permissible, but why not be uniform and call the birds either after the describer, or as those gentlemen intended they should be named.

Another thing to which I should like to call attention, and which I deplore, is the practice often followed by some men I know (and mighty good friends I consider them too) of calling birds by nicknames. For instance, a short time ago I was privileged to see some truly remarkable photographs of birds, the "names" of which were written on the backs. That of a flock of Black-crowned Night Herons was labelled "Squawks"; one of Black-bellied Plovers was "Grey Plovers"; Western Sandpipers was "Sand Peeps", and several others similarly. These names may be very expressive, and, if a man has a fair ornithological education, they will be understood, but the majority of the copies of these photos will probably fall into the hands of people whose knowledge of birds is limited. It is most important that the little which the lay public knows about birds, shall be correct. While a very small youngster, and just starting to collect single, end-blown eggs with the help (?) of a couple of popular bird books, I can clearly remember what difficulty I had in trying to distinguish between the Kingbird, as given in one book, and the Bee Martin in the other. I have never since forgiven the author of the latter.—A. B. HOWELL, *Tucson, Arizona.*

**A New Fly Trap.**—The English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is by far the most abundant bird in the cities of Imperial Valley, outnumbering all other birds (in the city districts) about ten to one. I have noticed them on several occasions congregated around store fronts early in the mornings while the air was still very cold. Close observation showed that the birds were industriously making hearty breakfasts of the flies which had settled on the store fronts the warm evening before, and were now benumbed with the cold. The supply of flies seemed inexhaustible but these imported fly traps must have eaten enormous quantities. I have seen the flies so thick that they could be brushed up by the quart. If the supply of English Sparrows in Imperial Valley can be increased sufficiently the fly question in that section ought to be solved, for flies, like English Sparrows, seem to thrive around our smaller cities and towns.—W. LEE CHAMBERS, *Eagle Rock, California.*

**Mexican Ground Dove at San Diego.**—A male Mexican Ground Dove (*Chaemepelia passerina pallescens*) was shot inside the city limits of San Diego on November 10, 1915, by H. G. Keith of this city. The bird is now in the collection of the San Diego Natural History Society.—HENRY GREY, *San Diego, California.*

**An Early Record of American Scoter for California.**—In sorting over an old box of bones here, I found the head, wing bones and feet of a bird, bearing the following data: 44931, *Oidemia americana*, ♀, San Luis Obispo, Cal., Spring, 1866, W. F. Schwartz. On the back of the label, in Baird's handwriting, is the statement: "First spec. fr. Pacific Coast. Keep." I do not know whether this information has any particular significance, since it appears Baird had recorded the species from Fort Steilacoom in his report of 1858, but it occurred to me this might be the first record for California and therefore of possible general interest.—CHAS. W. RICHMOND, *Assistant Curator, Division of Birds, U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.*

**Mexican Ground Dove, Western Grasshopper Sparrow, and California Cuckoo at Escondido, San Diego County, California.**—During the spring and summer of 1915 several species of birds were observed at Escondido, California (elevation 750 feet), which have not been found there commonly before; their appearance seems worthy of recording. It might be stated here that the rainfall during the spring of 1915 was excessive, which resulted in an *extended* as well as good growth of vegetation so that such birds as the Cuckoo and Ground Dove might have been led to wander farther than usual from their regular range.