

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.