

the beach and twisted around by the birds into a very compact nest. This was lined with a few white feathers, mostly those of the Western Gull. In many places these balls of sea-weed, remains of old nests, could be seen at the very entrances to the burrows.

These "cliff dwellings" were not entirely occupied by Bank Swallows, for a number of pairs of the Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon lunifrons lunifrons*) were also at home. In several cases typical bottle necked mud nests were built over entrances to old rooms of the Bank Swallow and contained eggs of *lunifrons*. Apparently an old Bank Swallow nest of sea-weed which was just at the entrance to a tunnel was used, and the entrance "bottled up". In one instance eggs of the Cliff Swallow were found at the end of a two-foot tunnel, lying in a typical sea-weed nest of the Bank Swallow but without any feathers for lining. Not more than four eggs were found in any nest of *lunifrons* while sets of *riparia* ranged from four to seven. At the time of our visit, May 13, 1917, most of these swallow homes held young or eggs far advanced in incubation. One nest of the Bank Swallow with a set of five eggs contained a decided runt, measuring .36x.30 inches and with no yolk.—NELSON K. CARPENTER, *Escondido, California, January 7, 1918.*

**The Rough-legged Hawk in Western Washington.**—One of the most interesting features of the fall migration of hawks, through this part of the state, was the taking on October 20, 1917, of two Rough-legged Hawks (*Archibuteo lagopus sancti-johannis*). The first, a male bird, was collected by Mr. J. Hooper Bowles on the Tacoma tide flats. Seeing something on a cross-bar of a distant telegraph pole that looked very hawk-like, Mr. Bowles carefully approached for a closer view, keeping the pole between himself and the bird. In this way he obtained an excellent "close up", and was, indeed, surprised to find it a Rough-leg.

The bird sat lengthwise of the cross-bar, on the sunny side of the pole, with wings half drooping. This odd attitude was observed by Mr. Bowles for a minute or more before collecting; when the hawk was brought to hand, he found the wings and tail soaking wet, which probably accounted for the strange position on the bar. A freshly eaten field mouse, found in its stomach may have been caught swimming across one of the many channels of the flats, and the hawk had probably been obliged to take a partial dip to secure its prey.

The other bird, also a male, was, curiously enough, taken by the present writer on the same day and only about a mile distant from where Mr. Bowles got his. The latter was taken in the morning, however, and mine in the afternoon. In coloration, the two are almost alike, and in very good plumage, though the one I collected was afflicted by a bad case of what we might call "scaly leg", so common among chickens. Several big growths were found on each leg, one or two of which had been picked by the bird and were sore-looking and bloody.

My specimen was presented to Mr. D. E. Brown, of Seattle, who reported finding the body covered with sores when he skinned it. The stomach of this one also contained a field mouse.

Though the Rough-leg is somewhat of a wanderer, local bird men have few, if any, records of it for this vicinity, although east of the Cascades it is frequently met with.—E. A. KITCHIN, *Tacoma, Washington, February 1, 1918.*

**Wood Duck at San Diego.**—On November 16, 1917, a female Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) in fine condition and evidently just shot by some hunter, was picked up near a water hole by Mr. Jas. McAuliffe and brought to me while still warm. The bird is now in the collection of the San Diego Natural History Society. This is the first time I have seen this species here, and it is worth recording the occurrence of this rare visitor to this place.—HENRY GREY, *San Diego, California, January 8, 1918.*

**Whip-poor-will in New Mexico in March.**—The characteristic call-notes of the Whip-poor-will, uttered repeatedly by two birds, presumably the Stephens Whip-poor-will (*Setochalcis vocifera arizonae*), were heard for some minutes preceding daylight on March 2, 1917, at Rodeo, New Mexico. This place is near the Arizona line, in the extreme southwestern part of Grant County. The altitude being above 4000 feet, the winter months are chilly, and on the date mentioned the freezing point was registered.

Notwithstanding this early appearance within our border, the usual arrival of the

species upon the breeding grounds, at least in that portion included in the Chiricahua Mountains, Arizona, is very much later. In this range of mountains, about fifteen miles distant from Rodeo, the Stephens Whip-poor-will is a fairly common summer visitant to the oak region, but I did not record it there during 1917 until May 21, this at Paradise Post Office.—AUSTIN PAUL SMITH, *Rio Hondo, Texas, December 29, 1917.*

**Some Pugnacious Coots.**—Our boat house rests in a cut opening out of Butte Slough, in Colusa County, California. Between the end of the boat house and the current of the slough, there are sixty or eighty feet of still water; three Mud Hens (*Fulica americana*) have taken possession of this spot. They have grown quite tame; not only do they come up to the boat house for their food, but when hungry swim up and are clamorously insistent with their "put-put-put".

The men have frequently told me that they were murderous fighters against their own kind, and one day I was a witness of such a fight. A strange Mud Hen swam from the creek into the quiet water. The first of the three to see him attacked the stranger at once, "putting" harshly, and the intruder gave battle without the slightest attempt to retreat. They pecked at each other savagely. The other two boat house Mud Hens swam up to the fray, one of them joining in, the other, the smallest of the three and probably the female, simply looking on. In time they pecked the strange Mud Hen into a state of exhaustion. It was manifestly too weak to fly, but tried to make its escape by swimming. They followed it up, and one actually stood on its body while the other held its head under the water until it was dead. When satisfied of this, they left it.

The men tell me that nearly every day they murder one of their kind in this manner, and yet oddly enough they pay not the slightest attention to crippled ducks which drift down the current and often take refuge in the same cut. It would, of course, be perfectly easy for the Mud Hen which is attacked to escape by flight, but in no instance, my men say, has one ever attempted to do so.

The third and smaller Mud Hen never takes part in the fight, but is always an interested spectator. Once a battle began when only one of the boat house Mud Hens was present, but its call soon brought the other two, which had drifted down the creek, and they came back to the rescue flying. It seemed to me to be a curious phase of pugnacity, considering the gregarious habits of the bird.—F. W. HENSHAW, *San Francisco, January 26, 1918.*

**The Name of the American Barn Swallow.**—In a recent paper entitled "The Birds of the Anamba Islands" (Bull. U. S. Nat. Mus., no. 98, June 30, 1917, pp. v+75, 2 pls.), Dr. H. C. Oberholser discusses the relationships of the American Barn Swallow with the closely similar forms of the Old World. He concludes that intergradation is complete through several intervening races between *Hirundo rustica*, the common Swallow of Europe, and our own Barn Swallow, and hence adopts the trinomial form of designation for the latter—*Hirundo rustica erythrogasteris*. Also the race *palmeri* once proposed by me from Alaska is not deemed tenable. With regard to both contentions the supporting facts presented seem to me now conclusive.

In the spelling of the subspecific name of the American form, however, I believe Oberholser to be wrong, and *erythrogaster* should be the proper spelling, not *erythrogasteris*. The term *erythrogaster* cannot be considered an adjective. It is a Greek noun, retaining its own gender and case when Latinized. *Hirundo* is feminine, but that should not affect the ending of the third term of the trinomial the case of which is, in this instance, nominative. If there were any doubt about this, final appeal to the original describer ought to settle it. The bird was described as *Hirundo erythrogaster*, which shows well enough the writer's intention. The name of our Barn Swallow ought to stand as *Hirundo rustica erythrogaster*. I am indebted to Professor W. A. Merrill, of the Latin department of the University of California, for pertinent information in connection with my present enquiry.

There seems to be a tendency even yet towards unnecessarily tampering with the spelling of names as originally proposed by describers. In this regard I wish also to protest against Oberholser's misquotation of my name *Guiraca caerulea salicarius*, emending it to *G. c. salicaria* (Auk, vol. 34, April, 1917, p. 204). *Salicarius* was employed as a noun, obviously.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, January 9, 1918.*