

One bird August 3, another August 9, two the day following, and one August 20. Also seen occasionally in wooded districts between Harney Valley and Klamath Falls.

Regulus calendula calendula. Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Common in spring at both Clear and Malheur lakes. Remained in the latter locality as late as May 15.

Myadestes townsendi. Townsend Solitaire. One bird seen in junipers near Clear Lake April 5, and several more in same locality April 7.

Planesticus migratorius propinquus. Western Robin. Common breeding bird in most sections visited, though rather rare around Malheur Lake in midsummer.

Sialia mexicana occidentalis. Western Bluebird. Fairly common at Clear Lake.

Sialia currucoides. Mountain Bluebird. Common in timbered sections throughout most of the country traversed. Occasional in brush country around Malheur Lake.

Los Angeles, California, December 21, 1918.

THE WILSON SNIPE NESTING IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

By EDWARD WALL

IN the May issue of *THE CONDOR* I note an article by Dr. Barton Warren Evermann entitled "Nesting of the Wilson Snipe in California". In this article are given all the published records of the nesting of the Snipe in this state. Some two or three years ago I was surprised when Mr. J. R. Pemberton informed me that the printed records showed no eggs of the Wilson Snipe to have been taken in this state, and at that time I prepared at his request a short statement which I intended to send to *THE CONDOR*; but after discussing the matter with other collectors of twenty-five or thirty years ago concluded that it was hardly worth while and that Mr. Pemberton was not, perhaps, so well informed as he might be on the subject. Now, however, I am convinced that for some reason mention of the Wilson Snipe as a regular nesting bird in California has been omitted from the published records of earlier days and so am appending herewith the original manuscript that I intended to send in.

My friend, Mr. J. R. Pemberton, informs me that a set of eggs of Wilson Snipe (*Gallinago delicata*) that I gave him some time since has caused quite a commotion in the oological world because of the fact that they were collected as far south as San Bernardino. I can hardly believe this but he insists that he can find no collector of today who has ever heard of the bird nesting at such a southerly point and both he and Mr. W. L. Dawson are of the opinion that it constitutes a new record.

However this may be with the collectors of today, I am certain that the old time collectors of a quarter of a century ago will find nothing to be astonished at in the record, for I personally know of several who have collected not only one set but many sets in the days when they were actively at work in the field. Personally, I have done little or no egg collecting since along in the early nineties, and there was a period of some ten years after that when I did not keep in very close touch with the ornithological or oological world and its news. Even today, although I have again started collecting an occasional skin and keeping a more or less complete record of birds and their movements, I have not been able to catch up with the progress that has been made during the interim. From 1887 to 1893 I was actively engaged in egg-

collecting and during those years gathered a sufficient number of the eggs of the Wilson Snipe to lead me to consider them as not extremely rare. So it was that when the eggs I have spoken of as having been given to Pemberton were collected, in 1894, there was little incentive to take them even after they had been discovered; and had it not been for a peculiar, to me at least, circumstance I should probably not have bothered with them.

At that time I had an uncle living on a ranch to the eastward of San Bernardino, and a portion of this land was swampy. Knowing of my interest in birds he told me one day of a bird that he saw about dusk each evening sailing around high over the swamp, that according to him would mount several hundred feet in the air and then, partially closing its wings, would swoop almost straight downward to within a few feet of the earth, the dive being accompanied by a loud whirring noise that ended in a sharp report. At first I thought that instead of a bird he had seen a large bat the name of which I did not know, but which I had been told had a somewhat similar habit. But he insisted that it was a bird, and at last I proposed that we go to the swamp together so that I might ascertain for myself just what it was that he had seen. The trip was made a few evenings later and I not only discovered that the bird was a Wilson Snipe but also by watching it discovered the eggs, and as I was not able to shoot the bird then, I took the eggs to furnish proof of what I then thought was something new in the habits of snipe. I subsequently ascertained that the habit was one that other observers already knew about and so thought no more of the eggs although I had already blown them and placed them in a cabinet. When I afterwards disposed of the greater portion of my egg collection I did not include that particular set for the reason that I had filled out no data blank, and in my hurry in packing the other eggs I did not care to take the time to look up my notes and thus obtain the necessary data.

Since learning from Pemberton that the records showed no such southerly nesting, although I had noticed that Grinnell's "List" of recent date was also lacking on that point, I have inquired of some of the old-time collectors of this locality, among them R. B. Herron, one of the oldest and most successful collectors of this section and a man known to most of us at least by the many references made to him in Davie's "Nests and Eggs of North America". He informs me that he never considered the eggs of the bird in question as being particularly rare in this section. Harry Lelande of Los Angeles also informed me that he always thought that the Wilson Snipe nested in the southern end of the state, for although he had never taken a set himself he had killed very young birds that had undoubtedly been hatched in this section.

I was somewhat surprised when I looked over Grinnell's latest list to note that he omitted any extreme southerly records, for I felt certain that he knew of the eggs having been taken in southern California, but attributed the omission to an oversight. Since Pemberton has expressed so much surprise in the occurrence I have taken the trouble to look up my copies of letters to Dr. Grinnell when he lived at Pasadena and found that at least on one occasion I had listed among the eggs that I would be willing to exchange with him a set of the Wilson Snipe. I have exchanged several sets with other collectors, but have not taken the trouble to look up my records sufficiently to ascertain just who the eggs went to. In any event I still feel certain that there can be no possibility of such records being any cause for astonishment, and am writing this not because I think it is a new record but because Mr. Pemberton, and

according to Pemberton, Mr. Dawson also, thinks that it is a new record and one that should be published.

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Since writing the above I have additional proof of the claim made by me to Mr. Pemberton that not only did the Wilson Snipe nest in the San Bernardino Valley twenty-five or thirty years ago but that it is still a regular nesting bird here. In 1917 I found a nest containing three eggs about two miles from the city of San Bernardino. In 1918 I found a nest with four young birds and an unhatched egg at the same place and this spring saw the nestlings of at least two pairs of Wilson Snipe a short distance east of San Bernardino.

While I am on this subject I feel constrained to say that while there may be no earlier published records of many of the finds being made by the later day collectors and claimed as new, I am convinced that a little investigating, by the claimant of new records, among the old time collectors might convince them that their finds are not so rare as they may suppose. It must be remembered that a quarter of a century ago the accurate recording of birds was not as systematic as at the present time and for that reason many birds were omitted from lists that were still not so extremely rare. This is not a criticism of later day collectors in any way, but simply a suggestion that before listing a find as something absolutely new to science it might be well to make an investigation that goes further than simply making the find.

I know of two such records in addition to that of Wilson Snipe. One of these is the finding of the eggs of the Dwarf Cowbird (*Molothrus ater obscurus*) in this locality. My good friend, Wilson C. Hanna of Colton, during the year of 1918 took several eggs of the Cowbird and also one or two specimens of the bird itself, and I was astonished when I learned that the record was considered as new. It so happens that I have still in my possession an egg of the Cowbird taken in the exact locality where Mr. Hanna found his last year. Mine was taken by Sheldon Sleppy somewhere about thirty years ago and I know to a certainty that he collected others there. I have never known of a bird actually being seen until Mr. Hanna took his.

This year Mr. Hanna informs me that he took a set of Anthony Green Heron and also informs me that the record is new. I have taken several sets and know of many more sets of this bird which we in those days knew as the Little Green Heron being taken in this section. While during my oological days we knew of no such bird as Anthony Green Heron, I have every reason to believe that they are one and the same bird. I have no eggs of this bird to show in proof of my statement, but I have notes made at the time of collecting them which I know to be authentic. As stated before, this is not intended as a criticism in any way, but is simply an attempt to put some facts on record now that would undoubtedly have been published many years ago had ornithological publications been as well established and as painstaking as they are today.

San Bernardino, California, July 2, 1919.