

Clark Nutcracker and White-winged Dove in Southern California.—On a recent trip to the Laguna Mountains, San Diego County, I was rather surprised to find the Clark Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) in flocks ranging from a few birds to fifteen or twenty in the flock. They were on the ground, tearing up the pine needles in search of food. Observed May 31 and June 1.

It may be of interest to note that at least one pair of White-winged Doves (*Melospelia asiatica trudeaui*) is nesting in the vicinity (Brawley). They arrived May 4 and have been about until the present date, June 12.—JOHN C. FORTINER, *Brawley, California, June 12, 1920.*

Interesting Records from the San Joaquin Valley Region.—

Costa Hummingbird. *Calypte costae.* On several occasions in the early spring months while collecting in the arid hills bordering the San Joaquin Valley at a point about due west from Dos Palos, I have found hummingbirds' nests of the previous season's use, built on branches of sage bushes overhanging dry gullies. Those examined have all been unmistakable nests of the Costa Hummingbird and quite typical in both situation and construction. In fact, they differ in no way from nests of this species which I collected in Ventura County in 1916. From this evidence it would seem safe to extend the known breeding range of this species northward along the east slope of these hills nearly to the 37th Parallel.

Hammond Flycatcher. *Empidonax hammondi.* An unseasonable record for this species is that of a male in bright plumage taken in the bottom lands of the Merced River near Livingston, Merced County, on December 20, 1918. The bird was frequenting the inclining trunks of some large, old willows in a rather damp locality. It was active and strong on the wing and no trace of any injury could be found while the skin was being made up. That this Flycatcher had been able to secure an abundance of food was very evident as the skin was reeking with fat.

Dusky Warbler. *Vermivora celata sordida.* On January 8, 1919, I noticed three Warblers which looked like rather dark examples of *lutescens*. They were frequenting some weeds along a drainage canal near Atwater, Merced County. On the 11th of the same month I made a hurried trip to the Merced River near Irwin City, and again encountered three of these birds after special search. The presence of *lutescens* itself would have been interesting at this date but I was convinced that the birds previously seen were *sordida*, and the single specimen taken has been so identified by Mr. H. S. Swarth. This species evidently wintered in some numbers in the San Joaquin Valley during the winter of 1918-19.—JOHN G. TYLER, *Turlock, California, June 30, 1920.*

Nesting of the Blue-fronted Jay in South Pasadena.—During the Christmas holidays my attention was called to a number of Blue-fronted Jays (*Cyanocitta stelleri frontalis*) flying about in a row of large eucalytus trees which form a boundary between our place and the one next to us. The jays were very noisy and were continually chasing the California Woodpeckers about the trees. The jays were seen and heard, from time to time subsequently, which surprised me very much, for at one time I thought they had left for their mountain home.

On Sunday morning, June 6, 1920, I heard a pair of birds scolding and went to see what the disturbance was. My presence on the scene interested the birds and they followed me about while I looked for a nest. I could not find a nest, but while walking about spied a young bird on the ground. This bird was dead and had probably been killed from a fall as it was just about time for it to leave the nest. The bird was saved and is now in my collection. Up to the present time (July 15) the jays are still about. It will be interesting to see if they will be on hand next spring.—LUTHER LITTLE, *South Pasadena, California, July 15, 1920.*

An Ovenbird on the Mohave Desert.—At about 10:45 on the morning of May 18, 1920, I was seated, in company with Dr. Francis B. Sumner, on a pile of bags, boxes, bed-rolls and other items of camp equipment which were stacked ready for transportation from our station at 5 miles south of Lavic, San Bernardino County, California, to Ludlow, about fifteen miles nearer civilization. Our eyes were fixed hopefully on a

black speck, which, accompanied by an inverted image of itself, we had reason to believe was approaching us across the glaring white surface of a dry lake, and would presently resolve itself into the truck which had promised to come for us and our outfit at 10 A. M.

At almost exactly 11 o'clock the truck reached us and came to a standstill beside a nearby windmill and tank of magnesia water, where the driver stopped his engine to cool it off. The truck, alas, was not the one we had ordered. It belonged to a mining company and was on its way into the Bullion Mountains above us.

Nevertheless, it had hardly come to a standstill, when a little bird appeared in the road beneath it, walking about gratefully in the small patch of shade afforded. Dr. Sumner spied the bird first. He seemed to think it odd or unusual, and asked me with interest what kind of a bird it might be. The fact that the bird was *walking*, and in a very teetery fashion, allowed me about two guesses, and I replied that the bird was either a Water-Thrush or an Ovenbird. The bird was tame, and I was soon able to see that the back was green and the crown old-gold. I asked Paul, the truck driver, to keep his eye on the bird while I rummaged through the packed outfit for my gun. Paul did as I asked him, and I am now able to prove to any who might otherwise have been skeptical that the bird was an Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*)—a male with testes $5/16$ of an inch in diameter. The study-skin now bears no. 40648, in the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

This is the only proved case of an Ovenbird on the mainland of California, though two were observed on the Farallon Islands, May 29, 1911 (Dawson, Condor, XIII, 1911, p. 167), one of which was taken.

I am not properly elated, I fear, at having been placed by chance under the necessity of taking the life of a lost Ovenbird on the inhospitable desert. In fact it seemed the irony of fate that of all birds I should have met this one, whom I have heard sing its ecstatic aerial song by moonlight over the pine forests of Massachusetts in June, and whom I have celebrated in a poem published in "Poetry: a Magazine of Verse."—RICHARD HUNT, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 11, 1920.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

To those interested in the protection and conservation of wild life upon our waters and whose attention has been called to the destruction of sea-bird life by the discharge of refuse oil from the ballast tanks of oil carriers into the water, the news will be gratifying that the only remaining company which persisted in this, the Union Oil Company, has notified the California Academy of Sciences of the cessation of this practice. A letter has been recently received from this company stating that it had completed the installation of ballast tanks to take care of this waste oil instead of pumping it overboard as was the former custom, and that there would be no further cause for complaint. The Audubon Association of the Pacific, the Cooper Ornithological Club and the California Academy of Sciences have fought this indefensible custom so vigorously as to bring about this satisfactory result.

Cooper Club members will be interested in the communication from Mr. W. Leon Dawson, addressed to the Club, as entered in the minutes of the Northern Division (p. 193), and in the Committee's recommendation concerning the subject matter thereof. In accordance with the Committee's suggestion, an understanding has been reached

with Mr. Dawson whereby, agreeable to all concerned, the Cooper Ornithological Club as an organization is no longer identified in any way with the "Birds of California" enterprise. We are assured by Mr. Dawson that prospects are favorable for the appearance of the first fascicle in January next, the plan now being to issue the work part by part.

A contribution of a nature to be exceedingly useful in systematic ornithology has just appeared under the authorship of Richard C. McGregor. This is his "Index to the Genera of Birds", issued March 31, 1920, from the Bureau of Science, Manila ("Publication no. 14", 8vo, 185 pp.). This list, of 8839 names, is rendered in compact form by being printed in small yet comfortably distinct type, three columns to the page, and with citations reduced to the barest essentials. By a special limitation of scope only five previous authors are cited, yet it seems practically certain that every genus name proposed up to 1917 is included. Enough information is given in connection with each name to enable the enquirer to find out all about its history. The amount of work involved in an index of this sort must be enormous. For example, the author states that he gathered 25,000 original reference slips,