

business of getting away straight ahead. It was flying about twenty-five feet over the road-bed and appeared plainly to be exerting all its energy. During this very short time the bird had gotten about thirty or forty feet ahead of me when I commenced crowding it.

Accelerating my speed until I attained thirty-five miles an hour, I saw I was gaining perceptibly on the bird, and maintained that speed. The dove was evidently resigned to its fate, for it flew straight over the road-bed for about a quarter of a mile, when I came almost under it, and with a violent left-wing stroke it shot off to the right and over the fields. At this instant I was endeavoring to regulate my speed to correspond with that of the bird, but its sudden side-step frustrated this. It is, however, safe to conclude that the dove's flight was in the neighborhood of thirty miles an hour. Certainly it was considerably less than thirty-five miles an hour, and there was no wind to hinder or assist its progress. Moreover its actions were totally unlike those of most doves under similar circumstances. They seldom crouch before flushing, and they usually fly to the right or the left, exhibiting no trace of confusion.

One element of error in the conclusion that the greatest speed of doves is thirty miles an hour remains, namely, that this bird may have been a grown juvenile with as yet undeveloped powers of flight; but it did not appear so to me.—FRANK N. BASSETT, *Alameda, California, August 16, 1921.*

The Intrepid Pewee.—During the week, August 15 to 21, 1921, we were in one of the Fallen Leaf Lodge cottages on the edge of Fallen Leaf Lake, Eldorado County, California. The whole country in that section of the state is generally well wooded. Our cottage was in the midst of fairly large forest trees, consisting of white fir, incense cedar and Jeffrey pine. One of the commonest birds about Fallen Leaf Lake is the Western Wood Pewee (*Myiochanes richardsoni richardsoni*), and one bird of this species had the habit of perching at the very top of a small incense cedar, about twenty-five to thirty feet from the ground, and darting off to catch flying insects, often making a single audible snap during the flight, apparently made with the bill at the instant of taking its prey.

This bird made many spirited attacks upon Blue-fronted Jays (*Cyanocitta stelleri frontalis*). The attacks usually consisted of a series of stoops from some distance and my attention was always drawn to the performance by hearing the snapping noise made by the Pewee, which sounded the same as the noise made in seizing an insect, but repeated rapidly during the attacks. It would not be safe to say that the noise was not made with the wings, but I think that it was not; yet I have a doubt on this point, which I was not able to clear up. Several times the Pewee was seen following flying Jays, but it was not clear whether the Jay was fleeing or the Pewee merely following. In these attacks the Pewee displayed the utmost dexterity, passing through the crowns of the trees without any perceptible loss of speed and dashing directly at, or very close to, the enemy. Its swiftness and accuracy of flight were not less admirable than its intrepid spirit.

The reaction of the Jays to these attacks was to move off as if annoyed or disturbed rather than alarmed, but in some instances the Jays moved off fast enough to give the impression of rapid retreat. The attacks always persisted until the Jay or Jays attacked had left. Once I witnessed an attack upon two Jays and again upon three, neither the size nor the number of enemies seeming to deter the truculence of the diminutive aggressor. This Pewee was under observation for short periods every day for a week and nothing about its behavior indicated that it had a nest or young to protect, and it seemed evident that the attacks on the Jays were entirely offensive.—CLAUDE GIGNOUX, *Berkeley, California, September 17, 1921.*

Birds and Oil in Oklahoma.—Floating oil on the Pacific is not the only trap which birds must avoid if they would live; for in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas the same sorts of traps exist and annually destroy a considerable quantity of bird-life.

In an oil field there is an inevitable waste of oil. This waste is caused by wild wells, leakage in tanks and pipe lines, cleaning out of old wells, tanks and lines, and simple abandonment of non-merchantable oil. All of this waste collects in artificial ponds which lie along natural drainage courses and after a few weeks standing becomes thick and gummy through the evaporation of the lighter constituents. From the air

these ponds appear as blue as ponds of water and they undoubtedly attract water fowl.

The smaller sandpipers, when migrating, fall prey to these traps in larger numbers than all other birds collectively. This is probably due to their habit of wading along the shallow margins of ponds in search of their food. I have seen ducks descend as if to alight in oil ponds, but they never do; they must be warned in time by odor or some non-attractive appearance the pond may have. The larger waders get their feet oiled up but not the plumage.

There is no remedy for this condition and the wild life will have to suffer its continuance as it does telegraph wires, light houses and the like.—J. R. PEMBERTON, *Tulsa, Oklahoma, August 21, 1921.*

Least Tern Feeding Young on September 25.—All during the early part of September, 1921, Least Terns (*Sterna antillarum*) were still feeding young at Carpinteria, Santa Barbara County, California. On September 25, one adult was still feeding a single young bird. The adult brought small fish at intervals of about twenty minutes to a flat in a lagoon where the young bird waited. At the approach of the parent the young bird uttered the characteristic *kit-tick*, opened its mouth and spread its wings. After feeding the young bird, the parent always dipped its bill two or three times in the lagoon as it flew off. Once the parent alighted in the lagoon and bathed. The young bird joined it, and both floated and splashed a moment or two.—RALPH HOFFMANN, *Carpinteria, California, September 25, 1921.*

On the Occurrence of the Buffle-head at Eagle Lake.—The article by Mr. Dixon in the last CONDOR was read with particular interest because of the fact that we had

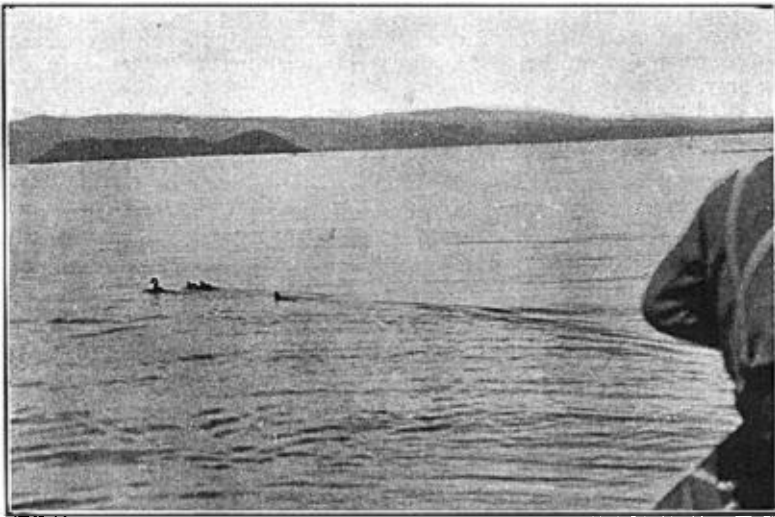


Fig. 32. IN PURSUIT OF THE BUFFLE-HEAD, WITH YOUNG, ON EAGLE LAKE, CALIFORNIA, MAY 27, 1921.

noted a pair of these ducks with young on the lake prior to Mr. Dixon's visit. Our party, consisting of Messrs. Jules Labarthe, Sr. and Jr., and the writer, after an extended collecting trip in northern California and southern Oregon, on our way south, encamped at the lake for a few days. May 27 (1921) was spent on a trip to the islands along the east shore of Eagle Lake. Here we found Farallon Cormorants with everything from newly built nests to those with half-grown young. The California Gulls, however, were