

one call to another and back again. During the breeding season they do not seem to have any regular hunting ground, but when the young are grown they become solitary, and do not go very far from home. Although they are very plentiful and I have spent much time in observing them, I have never been able to find a nest, or the hole of a solitary individual. They make good pets, eating raw meat, or mice, and becoming quite tame. When irritated they make comical efforts at defence, throwing themselves on their backs, snapping their beaks and grasping with the claws. They are too small to be serious antagonists, however. One which I kept for some time would "sing".—PAUL BONNOT, *Stanford University, California, November 7, 1921.*

Early Nesting of the Tricolored Blackbird and Mallard.—At Walker Basin, Kern County, California, on April 2, 1921, van Rossem made note of the following nestings which so far antedate anything published that a record of them is in order.

Agelaius tricolor. Colony of about twenty pairs in an old dead tule patch. From one fresh to four eggs incubated were noted, and one female was seen carrying food, probably to small young.

Anas platyrhynchos. Nest with eight apparently fresh eggs in a clump of grass near the small stream which winds about and through the meadow.

These dates would be early even for the lowlands, but seem extraordinarily so for this mountain meadow where the temperature was close to freezing at night, and where several inches of snow fell on the night of the 3rd of April.—D. R. DICKEY and A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *Pasadena, California, November 25, 1921.*

A Correction: Brewer Blackbird Not Occurring in Northern British Columbia.—In the *Condor* for March, 1919 (vol. 21, p. 33), under the title of *The Summer Birds of Hazelton, British Columbia*, I recorded the common nesting and the taking of two specimens of the Brewer Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). At the instigation of Mr. H. S. Swarth, I recently re-examined these birds. They consist of an adult male and a young bird in post-juvenile plumage. The adult is worn and dull and shows more purple reflection on the head than is usual in the Rusty Blackbird. The juvenile shows no indication at all of the rust so characteristic of the first winter plumage of that species. The measurements, however, are plain, and, in spite of superficial resemblances to *cyanocephalus*, I am compelled to reconsider my first too hasty conclusion and re-identify both birds as Rusty Blackbirds (*Euphagus carolinus*). There is, therefore, at present no record of the Brewer Blackbird in that section of British Columbia. In extenuation of my apparent carelessness I would like to state that at the time of writing the above paper the Rusty Blackbird had not been recorded as breeding in the Province and its occurrence there was unexpected.—P. A. TAVERNER, *Ottawa, Ontario, November 21, 1921.*

A Pigmy Owl Bathing.—On September 28, 1921, while camping at the easterly end of Kneeland Prairie, Humboldt County, California, in company with Mr. Chester C. Lamb, the latter came in from a trap in the woods with the report that he had seen a Coast Pigmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma grinnelli*) taking a bath. He described the bird as standing on the edge of a small cattle trough beside the trail and going through the process of ablution in about the same manner as any other bird. The trough was full to the brim and the little owl was dipping and dabbling in the water, finally shaking itself and preening its feathers. Later the bird was secured and proved to be a male still in partial moult, with few but pin-feathers on the throat.

Several ornithologists to whom I mentioned this matter said that they had never before heard of an owl bathing and had never accredited this bird with a desire for such a performance. Mr. Chase Littlejohn tells me, however, that at one time he had several Barn Owls (*Tyto pratincola*) in captivity for a short period and discovered that they were very fond of a bath. They were kept in a rather dark place to which they quickly grew accustomed, soon becoming quite tame. He used to watch them a good deal, to study their habits and attitudes, and frequently saw them bathing in a large vessel of water maintained for their use. Apparently they bathed every day; for if there were days in which he did not actually see them bathe he almost invariably noticed some sign of their having done so, either in the way of wet feathers, water on the floor, or at least some token.

Possibly owls usually bathe at night when no one would be likely to see them, which may account for our lack of knowledge on this point.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, December 5, 1921.*

The California Brown Pelican in the State of Washington.—The status of the California Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus californicus*) in the state of Washington seems, hitherto, to be founded altogether upon sight records and one or two mounted specimens that are supposed to have been collected in the state. The sight records were made by Suckley and other old time observers, while the mounted birds are even more uncertain, if possible, for proper scientific work.

It is with pleasure, therefore, that I am able to place on record a fine example of this bird that was turned over to me in the flesh a few days ago. It was collected on October 30, 1921, by Mr. Roger Evans, of Kapowsin, Washington. The locality was Lake Kapowsin, which is situated among the eastern foothills of the Cascade Mountains, and about one hundred and twenty miles from the Pacific Ocean. It was alone and no more were seen; neither have I had any other reported from elsewhere. The appearance of the bird so far from salt water may be accounted for by the fact that an unusually severe storm of several days duration took place just prior to its capture. Mr. Evans very kindly turned the bird over to us for the use of science, and it is now in the collection of Mr. D. E. Brown, in Seattle, Washington. It is an immature male, and presumably a bird of the present year.—J. HOOPER BOWLES, *Tacoma, Washington, November 7, 1921.*

The "Anthony Vireo" Not a Tenable Subspecies.—*Vireo huttoni obscurus* Anthony has held its place as a valid subspecies in both the second (1895) and the third (1910) editions of the A. O. U. Check-List. Also Ridgway recognized it in Part III (1904) of his Birds of North and Middle America.

In April, 1921, I had the chance of examining the type skin of this supposed race in the ornithological collection of the Carnegie Museum at Pittsburgh. This type, apparently not hitherto recorded, is now no. 16981, Carnegie Mus.; female; Beaverton, Oregon; March 20, 1890; orig. no. 2671, A. W. Anthony. I compared it with the other material in the Carnegie collection, and came to the conclusion that the name *obscurus* does not apply to a tenable race.

It happens that this same conclusion had been come to by Rhoads years ago (see Auk, x, July, 1893, pp. 238-241). And it seems, according to Rhoads, that Anthony himself had come to doubt the validity of *obscurus*. It is curious that these circumstances did not seem to weigh against the acceptance of the name in the 1895 A. O. U. Check-List.

Anthony, in his original description of *obscurus* (Zoe, 1, December, 1890, pp. 307-308), was, I think, misled by the seasonal conditions of coloration. The "rich suffusion of olive and yellowish tints" emphasized as the main character of *obscurus* is common to birds in fresh, or at least unfaded, plumage from throughout the range of *Vireo huttoni huttoni*. Those vivid tints are fugitive, and they go fastest and most completely in sunny as compared with cloudy climates; there is geographic variation in rate of fading (see Grinnell, Auk, xix, April, 1902, pp. 128-131). Southern California birds lose the "blush" of the new plumage sooner and more completely than birds of western Oregon. But as far as I can now see, from a repeated examination of the extensive material in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, the intrinsic color tone is very nearly the same all the way from Washington (a bird at hand from Tacoma) to San Diego County, California. I was misled in precisely the same way Anthony was, when I described the supposed form *maillardorum* from Santa Cruz Island (see Condor, v, November, 1903, p. 157), and evidently Bishop was similarly confused when he named *oberholseri* (Condor, vii, September, 1905, pp. 142-143) from San Diego County!

Now, Rhoads (loco citato) did not stop with showing that *obscurus* was untenable; he described a new race of his own, *insularis*, from the southern end of Vancouver Island. He had but three specimens, two of which he made the "types". These, as compared with *huttoni*, he describes as showing "over the whole plumage" a "sooty suffusion". I am tempted to suggest that these may have been town-smoked birds. Hutton Vireos from Vancouver Island are notably rare in collections. In the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology there are but two, both from Victoria. Both are dark as compared with