

be inseparable from *Toxostoma redivivum sonomae*. This is a more northern coast record than has so far been published, according to my recollection.

Another specimen of this species was secured near Cummings P. O., Mendocino County (California), and more were heard, but this locality is farther south and much more inland than Thorn, but not much farther north than Covelo, from which a record has been published.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California, January 12, 1922.*

Breeding of the San Diego Titmouse on the Mohave Desert.—April 12 of the present year, the junior writer collected a pair of San Diego Titmouses (*Baeolophus inornatus murinus*), five miles east of Palmdale, in the yucca-juniper association. The female had apparently laid but a short time previously, and there was undoubtedly a nest near at hand. Another pair was heard (but not taken) a few hundred yards away. These two birds are most like *murinus*, but are not typical of that form. They are grayer dorsally, and the wing of the male measures longer than that of any coast slope bird we have. These differences possibly indicate a tendency toward *griseus*.—D. R. DICKEY AND A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *Pasadena, California, December 5, 1921.*

A December Record for the Sage Thrasher in Colorado.—On December 8, 1921, we collected a female *Oreoscoptes montanus* on the College campus at Fort Collins. The bird was in good flesh, and its stomach contained two small pebbles and remains of twenty-one flies (*Anocompta latiuscula*).—W. L. BURNETT, *Colorado State Agricultural College, Fort Collins, January 1, 1922.*

The Bathing of Hummingbirds.—From the scarcity of published references to the bathing of hummingbirds, one is led to believe that these birds are not generally aware of the benefits to be derived from an occasional bath. I have seen hummingbirds bathe so many times that I have considered it a rather commonplace occurrence, though none the less interesting, and while reading a recent paper by John Burroughs (Harper's Magazine, May, 1921, p. 789), I was somewhat startled by the statement that "This morning I saw a hummingbird taking its bath in the big dewdrops on a small ash tree. I have seen other birds bathe in the dew or raindrops on tree foliage, but did not before know that the hummer bathed at all." This refers of course to the Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colubris*) and it may be that that bird seldom bathes, else so careful and experienced an observer would have seen it long ago. Mr. H. W. Bates in "A Naturalist on the Amazon" described hummingbirds as bathing by dipping into a pool of water while on the wing. This also probably refers to birds unknown in California.

During the past five or six years, I have, several times each spring, visited a little glen in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, in which at one place the water flows about a quarter of an inch deep over the flat surface of a rock. This rock has been appropriated by the Allen Hummingbirds (*Selasphorus alleni*) for a bathing place. The place at times was fairly swarming with the birds and the constant hum might lead one to believe that a nest of huge bumble bees had been disturbed. Suddenly with a buzz a bird would appear, hover over the rock for an instant, and then sprawl headlong into the water, stretching the wings and neck and lying prone on the rock, squirming the body and fluttering the wings until seemingly it became quite "water-logged". Then, just as suddenly, it would dart to a perch overhead, leaving a streak of mist in its wake like the tail of a miniature comet. Here it would preen its plumage. The surface of the rock was not over a foot across and I noted as many as four birds bathing simultaneously. Occasionally, after preening, one would return for a second dip.

Again on August 18, 1921, in Alameda, the Anna Hummingbird (*Calypte anna*) treated me to a rare performance somewhat similar to that mentioned by Mr. Burroughs. I had been sprinkling the garden when a male bird came to the rose bushes and literally sprawled on the wet foliage. For several minutes he crawled among the leaves, wiping the sides of his head, spreading the wings and tail, and mopping up as much water as possible, appearing ridiculously like a tiny parrot climbing about its cage. Following this he flew to a clothes line and preened his plumage. The garden sprink-

ler was turned on but he did not fly through the spray as I have heard hummingbirds will do.

That hummingbirds bathe, and quite thoroughly, then, is certain, despite the scarcity of references. No doubt they enjoy the bath as well as other birds, but the ease with which they penetrate thickets and cover distances has enabled them to escape observation.—FRANK N. BASSETT, *Alameda, California, January 21, 1922.*

Notes on Some Water-fowl.—Regarding the nesting of the Canvasback (*Mareca valisineria*), I have on two occasions caught young ones, nearly full-grown, in New Mexico, where I believe they nest in considerable numbers in the mountain lakes. Half a dozen pairs used to breed every year on a prairie pond on the C. S. Ranch, the property of Mr. Charles Springer, near Cimarron, Colfax County, New Mexico. I found them there last in 1915. In California, the southward migration of Canvasbacks leaves the coast at about the latitude of San Luis Obispo, and from that point follows the mountain lakes south. Many of them winter in the lakes of the San Pedro Martir Mountains, Lower California, but one never sees them on either coast of the Peninsula. The records of a club like the Bolsa Chica show how rare the "Cans" are along the southern coast of California, and yet on the grounds of the San Timoteo Gun Club, near Banning, Riverside County, one used to bag two Cans for one of every other kind of bird!

I once handled two fine specimens of the Black Brant (*Branta nigricans*) that were shot by a friend on a reservoir near Redlands in 1903. They were members of a flock of about a dozen, and I remember my surprise at seeing this strictly maritime species so far from the sea. I question whether the numbers of these birds have been so greatly diminished by shooting. They still winter in vast numbers on San Quentin Bay, Lower California, where the few gunners who have sought them have had no difficulty in making disgracefully huge bags. Perhaps the brant have learned to avoid our coast entirely, and pass by each year, in scarcely diminished numbers, to winter on the Mexican bays, where the report of a shotgun is seldom or never heard.

I believe that changing conditions, brought about by the deplorable influx of settlers into California, lead one to think that the fowl have decreased more than is perhaps the case—though Heaven knows the decrease is pitiful enough. In 1919, when I spent a few months at home, I found that dozens of ponds and lakes formerly alive with waterfowl, were deserted. Were the birds nearly all dead, or had they changed their wintering places? The geese are gone, like the cranes which, less than twenty years ago, used to pass in thousands over Riverside and San Bernardino counties, migrating northward from the Colorado delta. But concerning the ducks, I am not so sure. There are at present in California two great wintering regions for countless myriads of wild duck: the Sacramento Valley about Colusa, and the Imperial Valley in the south. The number of fowl concentrated in these two regions is staggering to the imagination. Only two years ago I sat in a blind near Gridley and forgot to use my gun while I watched tens of thousands of sprig trailing like films of lace across the sky. I believe that in an hour not less than a quarter of a million birds passed southward. The rice plantations of this region account, in part at least, for the desertion of other parts of the valley; the great irrigated areas of Imperial, with the tule swamps where the New River runs into the Salton Sea, seem to me to account for much of the desertion of once populous waters in southern California. A generation ago ducks were almost unknown in the Imperial district. If Imperial were suddenly to go dry, and all the birds wintering there to scatter out, as formerly, over the lakes and marshes of southern California, the prospect might look less depressing.

The fresh water marshes of Lake Chapala, in the state of Jalisco, Mexico, form another haven for waterfowl. At one end of the lake there is a great area of flooded land cut by a veritable labyrinth of sluggish channels, 400 square miles, I should say. The far interior of this swampy paradise, reached after three days' travel in a native canoe, is a vast sanctuary for wildfowl, a region of gently-rolling damp prairies, set with small ponds, and traversed by a network of navigable channels leading to the great lake. I saw as many geese, White-fronted (*Anser albifrons*) and Snow (*Chen hyperboreus*), as I have ever seen in the Sacramento Valley, and the number of ducks was past belief, with some interesting species, like the Masked and Florida Black or Dusky, to