

located near others of the regulation size and character. I am unable to learn that these peculiar nests have heretofore been commented upon. To my mind they are *roosting* nests, built for that exclusive purpose, possibly to shelter the male while its mate is brooding.

A mysterious crane (*Grus americana?*). The sonorous notes of cranes were heard on several occasions, always at a great height. In one instance the field-glasses showed five birds in all-dark plumage, circling round and round, in crane fashion, in company with three larger white ones with black, or dark, primaries. As memory serves me, they were identical in appearance with a similar flock seen in northern Illinois in the '80's, and which were doubtless Whooping Cranes. If these were not of that species, what were they? And if they were Whooping Cranes, why in California?

Black-and-White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*). During the past four years this species has been reported to the writer by local observers a half-dozen times or more, but these reports were never verified by actual specimens until early this last spring, when a bird was taken by Dr. L. B. Bishop near Los Angeles. Later, on April 6, I secured a male at Thermal, in Coachella Valley, feeding among the mesquites. These, I believe, are the second and third recorded captures for southern California. Mrs. L. U. Everhart, of Thermal, reported a specimen there in early March, possibly the same bird secured by me a month later. Apparently this species is becoming less rare in our region, or possibly bird students are making fewer mistakes in identifying the Black-throated Gray species.—L. E. WYMAN, *Los Angeles Museum, Los Angeles, California, June 9, 1922.*

A Unique Breeding Colony of Least Terns.—For several years a colony of Least Terns, the western form now called the Brown Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum browni*), had nested on the beach just south of the outskirts of Venice, Los Angeles County. (See Chambers, Condor, x, November, 1908, p. 237.) As this section built up, the terns had a harder and harder time of it trying to raise their young. I have found eggs within twenty feet of an occupied dwelling. Of course, with all the dogs and cats about, as well as curious children, there was not much chance for the poor birds. Finally the terns moved their breeding grounds across a canal, to the very last stretch of sand-dunes, and there nested for several years, but as the town continued to grow in population so did the tern colony decrease. When a bridge was built over the canal, that, of course, meant the end of the colony. The birds struggled along, however, till but a few were left.

On July 8, 1922, while I was hunting over the mud flats, a mile or more back from the sand-dunes, to my surprise I found that the terns had established themselves there in a most unusual sort of place for this species. It was gratifying to find them increased in numbers. They had chosen for their nesting grounds a portion of the dried-up mud flats, a little over a mile from the ocean. They will be in comparative safety there as they are in a posted gun-club preserve quite removed from dogs, cats and dwellings. Several nests were found, no nests at all really, the eggs being simply laid on the hard, dried mud. In some instances, where the mud was soft, the eggs were laid in slight depressions, scratched out by the bird and lined with a few weed stems. At this date sets of two eggs each were seen, but I did not ascertain the stage of incubation. I found two young birds just out of the eggs, one of the usual coloration, the other a light buffy bird. It looked almost yellow beside its nest mate.

The mud on which the birds were nesting, when wet, is of the most tenacious character. On the beaks of the nestlings there were masses of dried mud, accumulated, I suppose, when their bills got wet in being fed by their parents. I cleaned their bills but have been wondering if the mud would interfere with their successful rearing. A nesting site other than sand is a novelty in the life history of the Least Tern. I have seen most of their breeding colonies in southern California and they were all on the sandy beaches a short distance above high tide, or more rarely among the sand-dunes.—CHESTER C. LAMB, *Los Angeles, California, July 8, 1922.*

The Southward Range of the Santa Cruz Chickadee.—The southernmost place whence *Penthestes rufescens bartowi* has been recorded heretofore is near the mouth of the Little Sur River, Monterey County (Grinnell, Auk, xxi, 1904, p. 367; Jenkins, Condor, viii, 1906, p. 129). Coniferous forest growths of the humid coast type, such as are