

molt, in exclusively male flocks, yet ducks kept for use as live decoys seem to remain permanently paired the same as the geese. These ducks often are wing-tipped Mallards or Black Ducks, or their immediate descendants, and it is not clear why captivity should change their nature so far as mating fidelity goes. Nevertheless, these birds form permanent pairs, a fact taken advantage of by the gunners, who separate the pairs when using them for decoys, thus inducing the females to call more vigorously and more frequently. Pairs, of which one member has been left on shore all day, recognize each other at a distance when the decoys are brought in; whether this is by voice or otherwise the writer does not presume to say, but he has observed the animated, even excited, behavior of the expectant ones and the chorus of greeting, and eager though awkward and brief caresses upon their reunion. These birds are reported by their owners to pair for life, and the writer is fain to believe the report; yet in some species of wild ducks it would seem from the habits of the birds that permanent pairing is impossible.—W. L. McATEE, *Washington, D. C., July 3, 1924.*

**Period of Incubation of the Golden Eagle.**—On Washington's Birthday, February 22, 1924, Guy O. Glazier, a member of the San Diego Society of Natural History, took from the nest of a Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) near his ranch in Dehesa Valley, San Diego County, a single Golden Eagle's egg, which was all the nest contained at the time. He undertook to hatch the egg by means of hens, three consecutive Rhode Island Red hens being required to take charge of the egg before it hatched, on the forty-first day, or April 3, 1924. The eaglet Mr. Glazier was able to keep alive for three weeks, when it died and its body was presented to the Natural History Museum, Balboa Park.

Mr. Glazier stated that his object in removing the egg from the nest was to induce the birds, if possible, to desert the nest in which they had started to lay and move to another nest-site in which they had evinced interest earlier in the season. This site was nearer to his home and he hoped that he and his visitors might have the pleasure of seeing the birds more often. His experiment was successful to the extent that the birds made the desired move and deposited the second egg in the other nest. However, it was deserted shortly thereafter.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, June 25, 1924.*

**The Natural End of a Bird's Life.**—In the process of nature every living thing must pass away; yet how many persons have actually seen a wild bird die from natural causes? Many people have found birds that were already dead, and many, no doubt, have seen birds meet a violent death—as, for instance, by flying against wires, or when captured by a hawk. But never yet have I heard any person speak of observing even one individual—from the millions of birds he may have seen—die from other than an external cause. I have been studying birds for the last seventeen years, ten of which have been spent in field work, and the following case is the first occurrence of the kind that has entered into my experience.

About 6:30 on the morning of April 4, 1924, I was quietly skinning birds on the screen-porch of my home in San Diego when my attention was attracted by an unusually loud chipping which I recognized as that of an Audubon Warbler (*Dendroica auduboni*), although the tone seemed queer and unnatural. The voice sounded so full of distress that I left my work and started to search a nearby thicket of roses from which the sound came, thinking that perhaps the bird was being alarmed by a stray cat. To my surprise, I discovered a female Audubon Warbler ascending a vertical rose stem in a peculiar spiral manner. It continued the ascent rapidly to the very top of the bush, chipping at the top of its lungs all the time, and then launched itself into the air, flying in upward spiral circles, still chipping, until it had reached a height of about ten feet above the bush. There it suddenly closed both wings and fell to the earth, dead.

I picked up the bird and examined it externally with great care, but could find not even a parasite. The specimen was later prepared as a study skin and a thorough examination was given the internal organs, with no diagnostic results; in fact, both the crop and the stomach were empty. The bird was fully adult, in nuptial plumage,

and died presumably from some natural cause—hardly old age, it would seem, in view of the peculiar energy manifested at the close of its life.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *Natural History Museum, San Diego, California, April 28, 1924.*

**Four Species New to North America.**—The four species of birds new to the North American list here recorded were collected by R. W. Hendee and the writer on the expedition of the Colorado Museum of Natural History to northwestern Alaska, and will be dealt with in greater detail in the report of the expedition, now in course of preparation. We are indebted to Dr. H. C. Oberholser and Mr. Outram Bangs for identifying the specimens.

*Dafila acuta acuta* (Linnaeus), male, Wales, Alaska, May 31, 1922, A. M. Bailey.

*Dafila acuta acuta* (Linnaeus), female, Wainwright, Alaska, July 19, 1922, R. W. Hendee.

*Nettion formosum* (Georgi), male, Wainwright, Alaska, September 2, 1921, A. M. Bailey and R. W. Hendee.

*Pisobia ruficollis* (Pallas), female, Wales, Alaska, June 11, 1921, A. M. Bailey.

*Pisobia ruficollis* (Pallas), sex?, juv., Wainwright, Alaska, August 15, 1922, R. W. Hendee.

*Calidris tenuirostris* (Horsfield), male, Wales, Alaska, May 28, 1922, A. M. Bailey.

—ALFRED M. BAILEY, *Curator of Birds and Mammals, Colorado Museum of Natural History, Denver, June 4, 1924.*

**Sacramento's Western Martin Colony.**—A recent search of THE CONDOR failed to bring out very many facts regarding the nesting of the Western Martin (*Progne subis hesperia*) in California cities. Grinnell, in his "Distributional List," describes this bird as "interruptedly distributed as a breeding species along and west of the Sierras, south into San Diego County," suggesting that it nests in oak and pine regions and in small numbers in towns—as, for instance, Pasadena, Los Angeles, Stockton, and Auburn. Several have written of the colony in Placerville. In my experience, this bird nests in larger colonies in cities than elsewhere and because of the size of the colonies is more conspicuous. A visit to Pasadena any time during the summer discloses large numbers of these birds around the main office buildings of the city. Similarly, Santa Ana has a colony. My mental pictures of scattering nesting in the oak and pine belt bring views of Weed, Siskiyou County, and an old pine stub on Mount Wilson, in the Sierra Madre Mountains, which harbored one pair.

This note has been inspired by discovering six Western Martins nest-hunting around the cornice of the Clunie Hotel Building on K Street, Sacramento, on April 24, 1924. A glance skyward showed several other martins in flight above the city. On a visit to Sacramento during the middle of July of last year, martins were very numerous in the downtown district and their chattering was to be heard everywhere. They seemed to swarm about buildings along the alley between J and K streets near Fourth and Fifth streets. The numerous light-colored birds indicated young out of the nest.—HAROLD C. BRYANT, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, May 17, 1924.*

**Song of the Gray Flycatcher.**—On May 26, 1924, while crossing the Indian Reservation between Klamath Falls and Lakeview, Oregon, my attention was called to the song of an *Empidonax* in some small pines in rather open dry woodland. The notes were decidedly more emphatic and vigorous than the songs of either the Wright or Hammond flycatchers. I wrote them down *chi-weép, chi-weép*. After observing the bird for a time, I shot it. Mr. Grinnell has confirmed my determination and pronounces the bird *Empidonax griseus*. If the notes heard from this bird are typical, the species when in song can readily be distinguished from its congeners.—RALPH HOFFMANN, *Carpinteria, California, July 18, 1924.*

**Notes upon Certain Summer Occurrences of the Gray Flycatcher.**—In the recently published "Birds of California," Mr. Dawson's description of the nesting habits of the Gray Flycatcher (*Empidonax griseus*) attracted my attention at once, it was so