

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Parasitism in the Road-runner.**—On May 5, 1924, while crossing a railroad bridge near McKittrick, Kern County, California, a Raven (*Corvus corax sinuatus*) flushed from beneath it. On exploring I found its nest well placed in one corner of the framework. On examination I found it to contain three eggs of the Raven and one of the Road-runner (*Geococcyx californianus*). These were collected and now constitute set no. 1971 of my collection.

The location of the nest was such that a Road-runner could easily have descended from the top of the bridge into the nest, but it is doubtful if it could have flown to it from beneath. The question naturally arises as to whether the Road-runner was the first occupant and was displaced by the Ravens or whether it laid the egg after the Ravens began operations.

The period of incubation in the Road-runner is 18 days and that in the Raven, 21, as given by Bendire. Apparently if the Road-runner egg was the first to be laid its incubation should have been farther advanced than that of the Raven eggs at the time I took them. This was not the case, for the incubation was practically the same in all the eggs. The floating test given them all before blowing, the time taken to clean them, and the impression given as to their relative stage allow me to state that they were all about one-half incubated. This permits of the conclusion that the Road-runner egg was deposited after the Raven eggs were laid and also that it was done deliberately and with intent to demonstrate its Cuckoo affinities and to emulate the parasitic habits of the tribe.

It is interesting to consider the Road-runner's choice of foster parents for its offspring. It seems likely that the young Road-runner could have thrived on Raven diet, because the food habits of the two species are quite similar. If the Road-runner emerged from the shell in advance of the Ravens it would get a start in life and possibly be able to hold its own until crowded from the nest later on; then it might be able to shift for itself. We can also come to the conclusion that the Raven, of all birds living in the same life-zone as does the Road-runner, is the one and only bird suitable as a foster parent for young Road-runners. But because of the usual inaccessibility of Ravens' nests to the non-flying Road-runner, it is likely that only once in a blue moon will the parasitism be practiced.—J. R. PEMBERTON, *Hollywood, California, September 28, 1924.*

**Further Notes on Screech Owls at Buena Park.**—In THE CONDOR (XXIII, 1921, pp. 97-98) I sketched my observations on the establishment of *Otus asio quercinus* as a breeding bird in this locality up until June, 1920. Since then it has been observed frequently and at all seasons. On May 25, 1921, I found a juvenile dead on a neighbor's place, and on June 30 saw two full-grown juveniles on our place. July 2, 1922, I captured one apparently just out of the nest and not very strong on the wing, and on August 4 three were seen. April 29, 1923, I discovered a nest in a bark-filled crotch of a large eucalyptus tree beside our driveway, and only about twelve feet from the ground. The nest was well concealed by several years' accumulation of bark and trash and when discovered contained one adult bird and three partly feathered young. These young left the nest about May 27.

This year, 1924, I began to watch the nest early in the spring. On March 14 an adult bird was found dead under the nest tree with some feathers of its own kind in its beak. If this was one of the parent birds the remaining one secured another mate, because on April 23 there were four eggs in the nest. On May 4, I banded five nestling Linnets whose nest was in the same tree and not more than two feet from the owl's nest. Some time between May 4 and May 11 the owl's eggs hatched and on the latter date the young owls were exhibited to members of the Los Angeles Bird Banding Chapter of the C. O. C., who were meeting here. On May 18, I banded the four young and the adult that was in the nest with them at the time, giving them numbers 226191-226195 inclusive. On June 2, while looking at the young early in the evening, one of them climbed out of the nest and fell to the ground. While replacing it in the nest, I was struck on top of the head by one of the adults and scratched enough to draw blood. These young left the nest about June 15. At the present time Screech Owls are

frequently heard and occasionally seen in the evenings, but so far there have been no returns from the bands. Next spring may bring some results, when a brooding bird may be examined, and possibly its identity established.—JOHN MCB. ROBERTSON, *Buena Park, California, October 12, 1924.*

**Occurrence of the Alpine Three-toed Woodpecker in Washington.**—On July 12, 1923, an adult male Three-toed Woodpecker was collected at the Wenatchee Ranger Station, Asotin County, in the Blue Mountains of Washington. It was later pronounced *Picoides americanus dorsalis*, by Dr. H. C. Oberholser. This species, not previously recorded for the state of Washington, was found breeding in the locality, a nest being discovered in a live, healthy-looking larch (*Larix occidentalis*). The entrance hole, about twenty-five feet from the ground, was cut through perfectly sound bark. The specimen is now in the Washington State College collection.—WILLIAM T. SHAW, *Pullman, Washington, November 3, 1924.*

**Rocky Mountain Jay Using its Feet for Carrying Purposes.**—Reading in the November CONDOR (XXVI, 1924, p. 226) the notes under the title "More Birds that Grasp Objects with the Feet" reminds me of a case in point—one concerning a species not mentioned in those notes.

On my arrival at a snow-shoe cabin a few weeks ago, the usual half-dozen Rocky Mountain Jays (*Perisoreus canadensis capitalis*) came to await the scraps from my first meal. The latter consisted of bacon rinds, crumbs, and the like. I think it was one of the rinds—at least the morsel was about that size—which one of the jays grasped with *one foot* and, so carrying it, flew away with it. He had picked up the scrap within fifteen feet of me.—E. J. SAWYER, *Park Naturalist, Yellowstone Park, Wyoming.*

**The Coues Gadwall Extinct.**—In the Bulletin of the Nuttall Ornithological Club for 1876, p. 46, Dr. T. H. Streets described a native duck from Washington Island, in the Fanning group, under the name *Chaulelasmus couesi*. The following year, in the American Naturalist for 1877, p. 68, Streets relates that when he visited Washington Island in 1874 "the lake and peat-bogs were tenanted by a diminutive species of duck of the genus *Chaulelasmus*." These apparently are the only first-hand observations on this species that have been published, since Phillips, in his Natural History of the Ducks, vol. 2, 1923, p. 158, states that he has found no further record of the bird.

During work in the Pacific, in 1923, I had associated with me for a period of several weeks Mr. W. G. Anderson of Honolulu who was born about thirty years ago on Fanning Island, near the equator south of Hawaii, and who spent his boyhood and youth on that island and on Washington about eighty miles distant. He informs me that migrant ducks come to Fanning and Washington in considerable numbers from November to March each year, and that their hunting is a regular sport. Anderson is thoroughly familiar with the lake and peat bog on Washington Island, so that such a curiosity as a resident duck would certainly have come under observation. During all of his years of residence, however, he knew nothing of the native Gadwall, so that the species must have been extinct for many years.

The only specimens preserved are the two taken by Streets (now in the U. S. National Museum), and our only knowledge of its habits is the brief note by Streets in the American Naturalist. The species was probably exterminated by settlers who did not recognize it as distinct from other ducks encountered as migrants.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *National Zoological Park, Washington, D. C., November 26, 1924.*

**The Socorro Warbler Added to the A. O. U. Check-List.**—The Socorro Warbler (*Compothlypis graysoni*) has heretofore been regarded as restricted in habitat to Socorro Island, one of the Revillagigedo group, located about two hundred and fifty miles southwest of Cape San Lucas, Lower California. On November 3, 1923, I collected one of these birds at Todos Santos, on the Pacific Ocean side of the peninsula of Lower California, some forty miles north of Cape San Lucas. It is now in the collection of Dr. Louis B. Bishop. I was unable to ascertain the sex, but Dr. Bishop believes the