

Passer domesticus Again.—My question in regard to *Passer domesticus* using palms exclusively for nesting sites (Condor, xxvi, 1924, pp. 105-106) was answered in part by the birds themselves, the past spring. They became frequent visitors to our place early in the spring, and on March 29 and subsequently were observed carrying nesting material. The sites chosen were all fifty feet or more from the ground, in the large eucalyptus trees. On May 11, during a meeting of the Los Angeles Bird Banding Chapter of the C. O. C., Mr. Sumner climbed to one nest and tore it down. It had served its purpose and the young were gone.

The birds continued to increase until, early in June, quite a flock frequented the chicken pens and cleaned up the feed left by the young turkeys. Being of a tolerant disposition, I at first viewed these newcomers with more curiosity than aversion; but there is a limit to such tolerance, and on June 11 I brought my government sparrow trap into action, well baited with little chick scratch feed, and the first afternoon caught seven; and by July 5, twenty-four had been accounted for. That seemed to discourage them somewhat and the remaining ones moved to safer feeding grounds. At the present time we very seldom see one here, but I suppose another spring will bring a new crop that have never heard of sparrow traps and axes as a means of reducing population.—JOHN MCB. ROBERTSON, *Buena Park, California, October 12, 1924.*

Voice of the Turkey Vulture.—On August 9, 1924, while resting on the summit of a ridge in the Elk Hills, Kern County, California, an adult Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*) circled close to me a number of times. It distinctly gave voice to a low-pitched nasal whine, slowly repeated at intervals of about three seconds and greatly resembling the whine of a small puppy. The beak was not opened during the emission of the sound. The bird was close enough to me that I am positive the note came from it; in addition, the extreme barrenness of the ground at the spot precluded the possibility of the sound coming from another animal. I am unable to find any reference to any sound emitted by this bird, in any literature at hand other than the well-known hiss usually given as the only sound known to be made by it.—J. R. PEMBERTON, *Hollywood, California, September 28, 1924.*

WITH THE BIRD BANDERS

Under the Direction of J. Eugene Law, Altadena, California

Nuthatch in Pasadena Develops Trap Habit.—On September 3, 5, 6 and 7, 1924, the notes of a Slender-billed Nuthatch (*Sitta carolinensis aculeata*) were heard about my home at 418 Elm Avenue, in the heart of Pasadena, California.

On the morning of September 11, a feeding shelf was installed, about 4½ feet from the ground, on the side of a large grevillea tree. Chick scratch and opened English walnuts were put on the shelf, the walnuts being wired to the shelf. A few hours later the nuthatch was seen coming down the tree. Without any hesitation it went to the walnuts, picked out a piece of the walnut meat, carried the piece up the tree 10 or 15 feet and thrust it into a crevice in the bark. Then the bird came down for another piece which it treated in the same way. It continued to carry pieces of nut up the tree for some time. At first it seemed to be placing the pieces of nut into the crevices to hold them so that they could be picked to pieces and eaten, but later the bird seemed to be merely hiding them away.

This bird was heard or seen every few days after that. On October 16, it was seen on the feeding shelf at the kitchen window.

A single compartment trap 5" x 8" x 8" was made of window screen on a wooden frame. A drop door to be tripped by the entering bird was used. This trap was placed on the feeding shelf on the grevillea tree, but since no bands were available the door was fastened open. Sunflower seeds and chick scratch were placed in the trap every day with occasional half-walnuts. It was not long until parts of the hulls of sunflower seeds could be seen in many of the crevices of the bark, showing where the nuthatch had placed the seeds while opening them. Other birds probably ate the chick scratch.

On November 2, I was up bright and early to make good my threat to put all my first allotment of bands on birds the first day. About 6:30 A. M. I saw the nuthatch go to a feed table in a dead prune tree near the back of the house. It started near the ground and went up to the table, but a Gambel Sparrow had beaten it to that trap. It was not seen again until about noon, when it was caught in the trap on the grevillea tree soon after the trap had been moved there from another location. It was given band no. A-14369, and the accompanying photographs were taken with a no. 1 Kodak and portrait lens while the bird was inside a cage having one glass side.

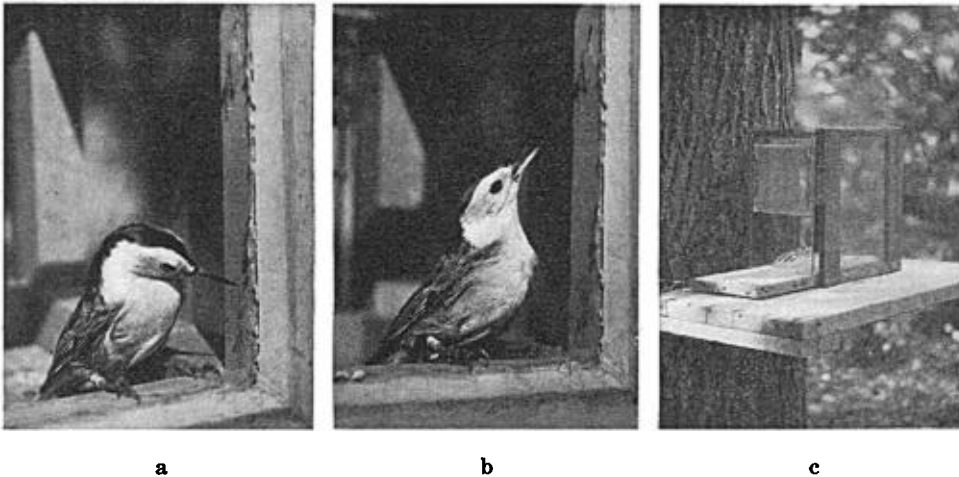


Fig. 15. a, b, SLENDER-BILLED NUTHATCH (A 14369) BANDED AT PASADENA, CALIFORNIA. PHOTOGRAPHED THROUGH GLASS FRONT OF CAGE. c, TREE TRAP IN WHICH NUTHATCH WAS CAUGHT.

This bird was not seen or heard for several days, and we feared that something might have happened to it; but on the morning of November 11, soon after daybreak, we heard it again. A few minutes later I put sunflower seeds on the shelf on the grevillea tree. While there I saw the nuthatch 10 or 15 feet above me and by the time I had backed away 30 feet it had come down and taken a sunflower seed away. I wanted to see that the band was not hurting it, so set the trap and in a few minutes the bird was in it. It was a sensible little bird and did not lose its head while in the trap or while being banded, and seemed to know where it was going every time it made a move.

The only other time I have seen a Slender-billed Nuthatch at this station was on October 10, 1919.—HAROLD MICHENER, *Pasadena, California, November 26, 1924.*

The Sprot Trap.—In the Canadian Field Naturalist¹ for September, 1924, Mr. G. D. Sprot describes a trap with a detachable funnel which should be a great success, and is very simple to make. When idle it is a low box of screen with a wide opening on one side, through which birds come and go at will. For trapping, a funnel made to fit the opening is shoved into place.

It occurs to me that if, in lieu of the funnel, one used a shutter door (as described for the Vest-pocket Trap, Condor, vol. xxvi, 1924, p. 198) supported by a stick to which is attached a pull string, he should be able to overcome the hesitation of the most refractory robin, thrush, or fox sparrow. The shutter door need not interfere with the use of the funnel when desired.

Returns at Stations in Southern California.—"To November 1" for this report, allowed little over a month for the returning *Zonotrichiae* to register, and the time given for banders to send in their lists was too short. But it was well, in both cases,

¹ Ottawa, Canada. Send 20 cents for the September number.