

removed by similar prying from the shell. When the body is freed, it is placed upon the rock. The young bird then immediately grabs it. Sometimes, however, the morsel is taken directly from the bill of the adult.

This process was repeated indefinitely at the rate of about two limpets per minute.—LAIDLAW WILLIAMS, *Carmel, California, November 9, 1926.*

Curious Perching Behavior of English Sparrow.—The concrete sections of the Oakland-Alameda Estuary tubes are being constructed in the dry dock at Hunter's Point in San Francisco. These are circular in cross section and are covered with a layer of waterproofing, and then sheathed with planks.

While walking along beside one of these sections I saw a male English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) alight on the side of the tube, clinging there with his claws and bracing himself with his tail in a manner very similar to a Woodpecker. His tail was spread out like a fan beneath him, and he was pecking into a crack between two boards. I could not find out what he was after, though I am sure there was no food there, as the boards had only been in place a few days and were in a position on the horizontal diameter of the tube, where it would be almost impossible for food to lodge.—ERNEST D. CLABAUGH, *Berkeley, California, October 17, 1926.*

Western Mockingbird in Contra Costa County.—Whenever one who has lived in the East is told that there is a "Catbird" at some accessible place in northern California, there is at once renewed an interest in a noisy old friend and a faint hope is raised that he may actually find one of these rare birds. In such a frame of mind I went looking about for a "Catbird" among some Valley Oak trees about three-quarters of a mile east of Walnut Creek in the afternoon of November 21, 1926—to find the usual thing, a Western Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*). But considering that even this species is not at all common in the Bay region, its presence may be worth recording, although only a sight identification. I did not hear this bird utter a sound, but my friend's account of its vocal activities fortified my opinion, based on sight. He had seen the same bird in the same locality repeatedly and had heard its mimetic utterances. The bird had no dark rufous coloration under the tail and *did* have the white markings of our Western Mockingbird, which it certainly was.—CLAUDE GIGNOUX, *73 The Tunnel Road, Berkeley, California, November 22, 1926.*

Designation of a Pacific Coast Subspecies of Chipping Sparrow.—For many years, since at least as long ago as 1901 (see Ridgway, *Birds N. and Mid. Amer.*, pt. I, p. 316), systematic students have known that the Chipping Sparrow of the United States as a species is represented by three north-south racial sections, the eastern *Spizella passerina passerina*, the Rocky Mountain *S. p. arizonae*, and an unnamed Pacific Coast race—just as with many another moderately plastic bird. Apparently following the lead of Ridgway, who remarks (*loc. cit.*) "I hesitate to separate them" (that is, the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain forms, to both of which together he applies the name *arizonae*), no one to this day has ventured to name the westernmost race. I see no good reason for delaying longer; therefore:

Spizella passerina stridula, new subspecies. Pacific Chipping Sparrow.

Type locality and type.—Pasadena, Los Angeles County, California; male, probably more than one year old, because of its solidly chestnut crown; no. 35320, Mus. Vert. Zool.; collected March 28, 1896, by J. Grinnell; orig. no. 765.

Diagnosis.—Resembles *Spizella passerina arizonae* Coues, of Arizona and the Rocky Mountain region generally, but wing and tail averaging slightly shorter, and general tone of light areas not so pale: hind neck and rump darker gray, ground-color of dorsum clay color rather than cinnamon-buff [of Ridgway's Color Standards, 1912], and whole lower surface not so white save on throat, but more pervaded with gray of a faintly buffy tone; resembles *Spizella passerina passerina* (Bechstein), of the eastern United States, closely in dimensions and tone of under surface, but tone of coloration lighter, as follows: hind neck and rump less deeply gray, dorsum and occiput more narrowly black streaked, ground-color of dorsum clay color rather than dull tawny, and edgings on closed wing decidedly paler.

Measurements.—Average of 10 winter and early spring males of *stridula*, from the Pacific slope of Los Angeles County, California: wing 70.4 mm., tail 59.0; of 10

winter and early spring males of *arizonae* from the Colorado River valley, in Arizona and extreme eastern California: wing 71.8, tail 61.3. Chipping Sparrows being largely ground foragers, their flight feathers are subject to much wear; hence the greater value of dimensions taken from winter or early spring birds rather than from summer ones.

The Colorado Valley series, measurements of which were just given, show in maximum degree the color characters of *arizonae*, but they are not as large as Rocky Mountain birds. Compare with figures given by Ridgway, *loc. cit.* pp. 311, 315, 316.

Range.—The Pacific Coast district of North America, from southwestern British Columbia south, west of the western margin of the Great Basin, to and into northern Lower California.

Remarks.—I have examined specimens practically typical of the present race from southern Vancouver Island, B. C. (as far northwest as Parksville and Errington, latitude 49° 18' on the east coast), and thence from many localities south to and including the Sierra San Pedro Martir, latitude about 31°, Lower California. The characters of the race *stridula* are fairly constant to the west of the Sierra Nevada and Cascades. But from the higher Sierras and eastward among the Great Basin ranges the Chipping Sparrows are varyingly intermediate toward the race *arizonae*; indeed many specimens are indeterminate. However, I have seen none but good *arizonae* from the Colorado River valley, in southeastern California (where wintering) and from throughout Arizona.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, November 25, 1926.*

New Records from Big Bear Lake, San Bernardino Mountains, California.—We were at Big Bear Lake from June 20 to September 10, 1926, and made the following new records for birds in this locality, as far as we know.

Western Mockingbird. *Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*. One noted on the north shore of Baldwin Lake on July 15. It seemed strangely out of place among the pines, junipers and buckthorn, and was probably a straggler from the desert to the north or east, where the species is moderately common.

Western Kingbird. *Tyrannus verticalis*. During August this bird was fairly common about Baldwin Lake, and individuals were seen as far west as Fawnskin, on the north side of Big Bear Lake. The first individual was collected on August 1. This is an abundant breeder on the desert.

Sierra Crossbill. *Loxia curvirostra bendirei*. One bright red adult male tentatively identified by Dr. Grinnell as of this subspecies, was collected on the high ridge on the south side of Big Bear Lake on August 30. No others were seen, even though we spent considerable time hunting for them.

Western Golden-crowned Kinglet. *Regulus satrapa olivaceus*. This species, though much less common than the Ruby-crowned Kinglet, has been recorded before from the San Bernardino Mountains in summer. During August, adults and birds of the year were collected by us well up on the ridge above Pine Knot Post Office; and on August 28 a young bird, that apparently had fallen from the nest, was found. It was still too young to fly. This is a nesting record. Dr. Grinnell checked the identity of this specimen, also.

English Sparrow. *Passer domesticus*. On July 22, Sumner saw one of these pests, a male, on the main street at Pine Knot. None was seen later and we hope that the Bear Valley surroundings are unfavorable to this species and that this will be the last as well as the first record for the locality.

The following notes may be of interest though not first records.

Duck Hawk. *Falco peregrinus anatum*. A very dark colored bird of this species, which we took to be a female because of its large size, was seen on the east shore of Baldwin Lake on August 15.

Prairie Falcon. *Falco mexicanus*. A female was seen at close range on the south side of Baldwin Lake, also on August 15.

Black-necked Stilt. *Himantopus mexicanus*. Noted on August 1 on Baldwin Lake. After this date the species became abundant along the shores of both this and Big Bear lake. The greater part of the birds had departed by September 1, although individuals were noted at both places until the 10th.

Wilson Phalarope. *Steganopus tricolor*. Small bands of phalaropes were seen on Baldwin Lake on August 1 and several that were taken were of this species. By September 10 nearly all had moved on.—WRIGHT M. PIERCE and E. L. SUMNER, JR., *Claremont, California, November 9, 1926.*