

*Regulus calendula*. Ruby-crowned Kinglet. I have taken specimens of this species in March. Only a migrant in this region.

*Planesticus migratorius propinquus*. Western Robin. A resident.

*Sialia mexicana bairdi*. Chestnut-backed Bluebird. Specimens have been taken at St. George, Leeds, and LaVerkin, Utah, in the spring months.

*Sialia currucoides*. Mountain Bluebird. Winter visitant. Taken by Mr. Woodbury in December.

*Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, October 29, 1926.*

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**A Strange Meeting with a Flicker.**—On the night of December 27, 1925, I had an experience with a Red-shafted Flicker (*Colaptes cafer collaris*) which seemed to me sufficiently unusual to be worthy of record. I was at Frank Stephens' ranch in La Puerta Valley, San Diego County, California, and about an hour after sunset, when it was completely dark and a light, drizzling rain was falling, I started to the pump-house for some water. I carried a flash-light in one hand and a pail in the other, being hatless and coatless at the time. After proceeding for a hundred yards or so I stopped to shift the pail and flash-light. While doing so, I was suddenly struck a sharp blow on the right arm, just above the elbow.

Completely startled, I dropped my pail and light, and instinctively grabbed my arm. To my amazement I found something rather soft, warm and downy, clinging there for all it was worth. Upon returning to the cabin with my prize, it was found to be a male Red-shafted Flicker. It was released soon after being identified, and lost no time in departing. Whether the bird mistook me for a tree, or my light attracted it, remains a mystery to me; at any rate, the fact that it was flying after dark and while it was raining is surely interesting.—JACK C. VON BLOEKER, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, April 29, 1927.*

**Correct Portraiture of Some Birds.**—In the London (England) *Field* for March 10, 1927, there is an article by Mr. Frohawk on the Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*). Among other remarks the writer points out that this species invariably alights on the ground, never perching in trees; and that, notwithstanding, both in pictures and in museums, the bird is frequently shown doing this.

Looking through what ornithological literature I possess, I find two books that are extensively used by bird-student beginners. In these two, also in a colored picture out of a series, the Short-eared Owl is represented perching on a tree or stump. Is this owl never known to perch on a fence post? I have seen an individual seated on a hay stack.

Recently I purchased *British Birds*, by Archibald Thorburn, with the author's own beautiful illustrations. In this work the Short-eared Owl is portrayed squatting on the ground. In describing the Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) the same author says: "Like most, if not all Petrels, the Fulmar appears to be unable or unwilling to stand on its feet, and rests when on the ground in a crouching attitude." I presume that does not imply that the petrels, shearwaters, and fulmars cannot and do not walk about in the ordinary manner. But in the above-mentioned beginners' manuals the greater number of pictures represent the birds of this group at rest in an upright posture, or even on one leg.—L. B. POTTER, *Eastend, Saskatchewan, May 30, 1927.*

**The Rufous-necked Sandpiper on St. Paul, Pribilof Islands.**—In the bird collection of the California Academy of Sciences there is a specimen (no. 23552, male) of *Pisobia ruficollis* (Pallas) collected by G. Dallas Hanna at Northeast Point, St. Paul Island, Alaska, August 27, 1920. This bird was recorded as the Least Sandpiper by Mailliard and Hanna (*Condor*, XXIII, 1921, p. 95), but recent examination of the skin aroused suspicion that it might not belong to that species. It was sent to the United States National Museum for determination, where examination by Dr. C. W. Richmond, Mr. J. H. Riley, and Dr. H. C. Oberholser settled its specific identity as above indicated.

*Pisobia ruficollis* is at present in the "Hypothetical List" of North American birds, one record, from Nome, Alaska (Thayer, Condor, xi, 1909, p. 178), being regarded as too questionable, and another (Buturlin, Condor, xii, 1910, p. 44) as too indefinite to be satisfactory. The capture here recorded establishes the species as of at least occasional occurrence within the territory included by the A. O. U. Check-List. Dr. Hanna tells me that the bird was alone when he shot it.—H. S. SWARTH, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, March 26, 1927.*

**The Plumages of Certain Gulls.**—*Larus hutchinsii* was the name given by Richardson (Fauna Bor.-Amer., ii, 1831, p. 419) to a large, pure white gull said to breed on the Albany River in the far north. After passing through various vicissitudes, this name was held by Dr. Dwight (The Gulls of the World, Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist., LII, 1925, p. 246) to apply merely to an unusual plumage of the second winter of *Larus hyperboreus*. That it is more than this, in fact the regular late winter plumage in both the first and second year, acquired chiefly by fading of the fresh fall plumage, all the specimens of the young of *L. hyperboreus* I have seen lead me to believe; and the same fading and wear produce much the same effect in the only other of the white-winged gulls that I have been able to study extensively, *Larus glaucescens*.

Starting with the juvenal plumage of buffy, mottled with pale grayish clove-brown above, with the wings, tail and under-parts chiefly pale drab (as described by Dr. Dwight), fading goes on with great rapidity, as would be expected with such a plumage of pale grays and browns exposed to a brilliant sun and salt water, as Dr. Dwight showed years ago. As a result, by January there is little of the original color left, and by March and April these birds become almost completely white. These changes are shown in the following specimens in my collection, all of which have the slender, pointed primaries of the first year.

Four young, which I collected at St. Michael, Alaska, in September, 1899, show the juvenal plumage as described by Dwight. One collected by Mr. Wyman at Hyperion, November 24, 1915 (Los Angeles Museum, no. 14142), has faded to a dirty brown; another taken January 28, 1921 (L. A. Mus., no. 4397), is still whiter; and a third, of March 26, 1917 (L. A. Mus., no. 1800), closely resembles the birds I will now describe.

The "*hutchinsii*" plumage is well shown in a yearling male (?) *Larus hyperboreus barrovianus*, which I collected at Hyperion, Los Angeles County, California, March 13, 1922 (no. 32968, coll. L. B. Bishop). It is pure white, except that there are faint indications of the dark markings on rectrices and rump, a few dark shaft stripes on lesser wing-coverts, faint streaks on head and face, and a dull brownish wash on breast and abdomen, most pronounced on the last. A few fresh feathers appearing on back and scapulars are pale ochraceous, barred with dusky. The shafts of the primaries are very pale yellow, white at tip.

Another yearling male, collected at Anaheim Landing, Orange County, May 13, 1922 (no. 32969), is like the last, but still whiter; the abdomen is pale grayish, and the dark markings are perceptible only on the nape and tail feathers, the bird otherwise being pure white.

A young *L. h. hyperboreus* (no. 8535) from Labrador, said to have been taken in November, but probably later in the year, obtained in 1899 from Mr. Sornborger, is an almost exact duplicate of no. 32968, even to the faint traces of the first winter plumage on rump, wings and abdomen, though the abdomen is a little paler and the rump darker.

Clinching the fact that these are normal young birds in the first winter, changed by wear and fading, a yearling female *L. h. barrovianus* collected by Mr. Hersey at St. Michael, Alaska, July 15, 1915 (no. 27255), has assumed the normal second-year plumage, except as follows: The three outer primaries of each wing, the secondaries, and some of the short wing-coverts are snow white, the primaries with yellowish shafts, and, though greatly worn, the pointed, juvenal feathers. The new feathers, including the inner primaries, are of the normal, second-year plumage.

A series of first-year *Larus glaucescens* which I collected in every month from October to August on the coast of California, the summer birds near Moss Landing, Monterey County, show the same white plumage through wear and fading, though not to so great a degree. The latter would be expected, because the fall plumage of the young of this species is darker than that of *L. hyperboreus*. Females taken in June and August and a male in July (nos. 32975, 32976, 32988) have the primaries, rectrices and tertiaries worn to quills, and they, and most of the rest of the plumage, are yellowish white, the rump and the bases of the rectrices and the abdomen being pale drab