

The presence of hundreds of Southern Western Gulls (*Larus occidentalis wymani*) in the air, close by, no doubt had some bearing on the behavior of the Heermann Gulls, as the latter seemed loath to give their larger relatives a chance to rob their nests. On taking wing they protested vociferously at the intrusion. Their high-pitched calls did not resemble the hoarse, heavy voices of the Western Gulls and, in comparison, seemed plaintive and weak. They did not leave their nesting site, and, after hovering close overhead while the nests were being inspected, they returned to them as soon as the intruder had retired a short distance.

The largest avian population of the island consisted of the Western Gulls. They, too, were about to lay, as their completed nests were found all about the more level places, with the owners standing nearby. Next in numbers were Farallon Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus albociliatus*), of which there was a nesting colony of some 300 pairs on the western end of the island.

Other birds observed during this very short stay included a small flock of some 20 Horned Larks (*Otocoris alpestris enertera*), several pairs of Western Ravens (*Corvus corax sinuatus*), which foraged the beach and were ever on the watch for an unguarded gull's or cormorant's nest, a small flock of Black Turnstones (*Arenaria melanocephala*), and about a dozen Least Sandpipers (*Pisobia minutilla*). Several pairs of Frazar Oyster-catchers (*Haematopus palliatus frazari*) were seen along the western shore, where the surf was breaking, and an American Osprey's (*Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*) nest, perched on the top of an outlying rock, was occupied by two well feathered young. A pair of American Duck Hawks (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) had its nest containing two heavily incubated eggs in a recess of a small cliff, and Cassin Auklets (*Ptychoramphus aleuticus*)—probably the Duck Hawks' mainstay for food—were abundant. Their burrows were everywhere in the soft soil on the top of the island and contained young. A sharp watch was kept for small land birds of the sparrow family, but none was observed.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, May 27, 1927.*

Bird Banding Near Barkerville, British Columbia.¹—It is too early for a serious report on the little group of banding stations near Barkerville in the Cariboo district of British Columbia; for our work, so far, has amounted to little. We hope to establish a geographical unit of three separate stations, ideally related in respect to the local topography, in the central interior of the Province, hitherto a blank on the banding map. Even the output of three busy stations would be a mere drop in the tides of avian migration which sweep and eddy over so large and so varied an area. But, in addition to the gambler's chance (and it is to the delight of such gambling that the success of banding will be due) of producing evidence on the great migrations, the proposed stations, if they succeed as they should in catching one another's birds, might produce much of interest and importance for their own remote and untouched locality.

These localities occupy the points of a narrow isosceles triangle, the base of which stretches six miles from Bear Lake to Indianpoint Lake and the sides northward about 18 miles down Bear River and Indianpoint Creek to near their junction. The intervening areas are the chief waterways and feeding grounds of the locality, the remainder of which is largely mountain-top, or cold, late, northern forest, representing different zones and small specialized faunas. It will be interesting to see to what extent birds are thus led from one station to another; and local population, its distribution, minor movements and directions of arrival and departure may perhaps be observed to advantage. Furthermore, the owners of two of the stations spend frequent periods above timberline, where they hope to work with an eye to data on vertical migration. At least two and frequently three stations will be in operation at all seasons.

Last summer one station banded nearly 500 birds, while that of Mrs. Joseph Wendle, at Bear Lake, made a good start. Mrs. Wendle has worked hard on the Bear Lake birds for some years, and her records are becoming valuable. Mr. Deane Cochran is now equipping his most interesting location on Indianpoint Creek and is ready to open with the advent of spring.

Among the special problems which the north woods present, that of the cone-eaters is perhaps the hardest. They are apt to remain, literally as well as figuratively, above human blandishments. Free of an empire of cone-studded spires bounded only by the oceans and the northern limit of trees, and adapted through evolutionary ages to manip-

¹ Presented at Annual Meeting of Western Bird Banding Association, Los Angeles, April 16, 1927.

ulate the cones *in situ*, we can offer them little for which they care a snap of their beaks. Even when the grosbeaks descend to lowlier seed-bearing plants, we have had little luck with picked seed or artificial bait, while the redpolls and siskins scorn us completely, with one interesting exception.

The grosbeaks are eager for exposed unfrozen earth in winter, and find it most often at the mouths of sheltered burrows among the roots of forest trees (braving, not always with impunity, the lurking weasels), or under the eaves of trappers' cabins. The siskins, in spring and early summer, have a passion for a certain type of sandy, yellow clay (not gravel), when fresh dug, in spots of which they will pick for hours in large numbers, neglecting quantities of apparently similar material, as well as baits of salt or ashes placed alongside. Failing this, at the same season they are eager for ashes, and will brave the smoke and heat of a dying camp-fire in efforts to obtain them. These are curious gastronomic reactions to the deprivations of the northern winters, comparable, perhaps, to the human trapper who returns from a winter of fish and poor game ready to consume the contents of a three-pound lard pail with a spoon. As many as 125 siskins were trapped at such spots last spring, and a few pine grosbeaks in mid-winter. The siskins rarely repeat.

With the warblers, again, we have to compete with the myriad insects of the north, and the ubiquitous water. Those caught so far have blundered into house traps, machines which, given time, may be trusted to catch most things, including rabbits and skunks.

War against hawks, owls and weasels is continuous. The writer shot five accipiters at one place last summer in about a week. The inexhaustible small rodents are a great nuisance with traps of the Potter type.

It is a pleasant accident that several naturalists should find themselves located in such relationship, as much as 100 miles from the sound of a locomotive whistle.—T. T. McCABE, *Barkerville, British Columbia, March, 1927.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The present field season is witnessing greater activity, perhaps, than ever before in the penetration of new territory for specimens and information relating to birds. In western North America we happen to know of the following field work in progress by Cooper Club members during part or all of the summer. Doubtless there are many others afield, too. Representing the California Academy of Sciences, Messrs. Joseph Mailliard, H. S. Swarth and R. M. Gilmore have been working certain localities in south-central Arizona. Under the auspices of the San Diego Society of Natural History, Mr. L. M. Huey is visiting certain portions of northern Lower California. In the interests of the California Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Misses Annie M. Alexander and Louise Kellogg and Messrs. E. Raymond Hall and Jean M. Linsdale have been working certain valleys and adjacent mountains in extreme western Nevada, and Mr. Chester C. Lamb has done collecting as far south as 27° latitude in Lower California. Messrs. Adrey E. Borell and Ralph Ellis, Jr., in the latter's interests, are visiting the Ruby Mountains in extreme eastern

Nevada. Messrs. J. R. Pemberton, O. W. Howard and J. Stuart Rowley have explored Salton Sea, with some astonishing results shortly to be announced.

We wish to question the propriety of printing purely systematic contributions concerning birds in other than regular ornithological channels of publication. We must at once acknowledge our own misdeeds in this regard; but we now regret these. No factor, such as speed of publication, seems to us now to compensate for the inconsiderateness of placing one's contributions to systematics beyond the easy reach of future students. We can see little or no excuse to warrant "burying" articles of this nature in such non-ornithological, or obscure, series as the *Ohio Journal of Science*, or the *Proceedings of the Southern California Academy of Science!*

An attractive set of cards, portraying in color important kinds of Australian birds, has been published by the Australian Museum (W. T. Wells, Secretary), Sydney. These cards can be had in a set of 30, for 6 shillings, plus postage. The