

tion. This is my first record for this species at Big Bear Lake though it occurs quite commonly ten miles to the east among the piñon pines.

My first record for the Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens cinerascens*) for Big Bear Lake was a single bird near Pine Knot on July 14.

On September 1 a Road-runner (*Geococcyx californianus*) crossed in front of my car on the main road through the pines on the north shore of the lake near Camp Juniper. I believe that this is the first record for this bird for Big Bear Lake. To me the bird seemed very much out of place in this Transition association.

On July 5 an American Osprey (*Pandion haliaëtus carolinensis*) was seen flying along the shore of Big Bear Lake near the Moon Camp. It was carrying a fish in its talons. This bird is of rather uncommon occurrence for this region.

During the latter part of August and early September, Pintail Ducks (*Dafila acuta tzitzihoo*) were unusually abundant at Baldwin Lake, and several large flocks were seen on Big Bear Lake. Many were shot on the opening day of the season, October 1, but the greater number left soon after the bombardment started.—WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California, January 20, 1929.*

Lesser Yellow-legs in Willamette Valley, Oregon.—On November 21, 1928, I found two Lesser Yellow-legs (*Totanus flavipes*) feeding in shallow water of a small slough running into the Willamette River, near its mouth. It was a sunny, warm day and the birds permitted me to approach within twenty yards but worked away when I tried to get nearer. They were there when I left, as I did not flush them. These two birds are the first of this species I have seen in the Willamette Valley.—ED. S. CURRIER, *Portland, Oregon, January 10, 1929.*

Blackbirds Feeding on the Forest Tent Caterpillar.—At Rollings Lake, British Columbia, on June 5, 1925, it was observed that Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) and Brewer Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) were busily feeding on the forest tent caterpillars that partly had defoliated the poplar trees along the lake shore. Both species nested in the vicinity; the redwings in two small tule marshes that fringe the lake shore; the Brewer Blackbirds in stumps, on the ground, or in crevices of dead poplar trees that stood close to the lake. Blackbirds of both species also were seen flying from the infested trees to their nests and back again, presumably carrying the larvae to their young.—J. A. MUNRO, *Okanagan Landing, B. C., January 15, 1929.*

A Shower of Grebes.—During an early morning hour (about 2 A. M.) of December 13, 1928, residents of Caliente, Nevada, were awakened by a heavy thumping of something falling on the roofs of their houses. Those who were curious enough to step outside and investigate the unusual occurrence found scores of water birds in the new fallen snow. The next morning, several thousand eared grebes (*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*) were found on the ground and flat roofs of business houses throughout the city.

Mr. E. C. D. Marriage, Editor of the Caliente Herald, and formerly secretary to the Cambridge University (England) Natural History Society, writes that "literally thousands of these birds were found in every portion of the town and outskirts." In a personal communication to me he says, "We saved thousands by putting them in the creek; most of those that died were crippled in some way; they were forced out of the air by the heavy density of the snow which bore them to the ground, thousands being buried under the snow, and working themselves out in the morning. I watched hundreds coming up through the snow. Many flew off at noon, going southwest. Hundreds were killed by hitting the wires, houses, and trees. Caliente had the main bunch, but they were scattered for twenty miles every way."

In a later issue of his paper, this Editor asserts: "Many thousands of the birds have remained in the vicinity of Caliente in the Meadow Valley Wash and other streams and ponds. Thousands died, and Deputy Sheriff Frank Palmer is superintending the work of clearing the streets and the flat roofs of the business houses of the dead birds which died when they hit the buildings and trees of Caliente, the dead birds being stacked in big piles and hauled away." Numerous other reports confirm the Editor's account.

A stockman, riding after cattle in the mountains some fifteen miles southwest of Caliente, found many of these birds helplessly marooned in the snow. A few scattered individuals (probably of the same species) were found as far south and west as Las Vegas, Nevada. A high school teacher of Enterprise, Utah—some forty-five miles east and north of Caliente—writes that “several hundred Grebes dropped in the streets” of Enterprise during this same night. Several hundred more were reported being found in the snow at Uvada and Modena, Utah.

Five specimens of *Colymbus n. californicus* were sent to me from Caliente, Nevada, and Enterprise, Utah. All the fallen birds were regarded as being of this species. However, inasmuch as grebes experience such difficulty in rising from the land, many of those that flew on south may have been some other species of waterfowl. Those that did not fly off were often observed picking feathers from their breasts and eating them. They were fat; however, nothing but feathers was found in the stomachs of those examined.

It is only conjecture to say from which bodies of water the birds left to go on this fatal migratory flight. Possibly many came from the area of the Bear River Marshes and Great Salt Lake, Utah. The writer observed many grebes there in November. As the marshes became frozen over the birds may have gone farther out on the saline water of the Great Salt Lake to feed upon brine shrimps. The freshwater lakes of northern and central Utah were frozen over two or three weeks prior to this flight of the grebes.

It would be interesting to speculate as to the causes of such a general and complete migration. The evening of December 12, the air was comparatively warm and still. By midnight a general and heavy snowstorm set in. The birds appeared to be in large flocks and were probably following down the Meadow Valley Wash on their way to the Pacific coast of southern California or to some inland lake near there. The bright lights of the railroad yards at Caliente may have attracted them there.

This unusual occurrence seems further to indicate that the grebes are much more numerous in the west than we had hitherto believed they were. It further points to the fact that they often migrate at night time. It also shows that many are very late migrants.—CLARENCE COTTAM, *Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, January 21, 1929.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The fourth annual meeting of the Cooper Ornithological Club will be held in San Francisco and Berkeley, on Friday and Saturday, May 17 and 18, 1929. Sessions for the presentation of papers will be held in the mornings and afternoons, and the evening schedule includes the annual meeting of the Board of Governors and a dinner for members of the Club and visitors. The scientific sessions on May 17 will be held in the Auditorium of the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, and those of May 18 on the Campus of the University of California at Berkeley. An art exhibit of natural history subjects will be included in the attractions of the meeting. Members expecting to attend are asked to notify the Committee of this fact, on the blanks which shortly will be mailed to them. Those who expect to present papers are asked to give for each

the exact title and the time required, and to indicate whether lantern slides or motion pictures are to accompany the paper. Lantern and film projection facilities will be provided at the meetings. If the supply of papers is in excess of the allotted time for reading and discussion the Committee will reserve the right to limit papers to a maximum of 15 minutes and contributors to a single appearance on the program. The Committee in charge will be glad to arrange for field trips to points of ornithological interest in the San Francisco Bay region, provided a sufficient number of members or guests are interested. At the annual meeting of the Board of Governors it is hoped that the articles of incorporation, which will place the Club in position to receive bequests, will be acted upon finally. Further information on the annual meeting may be obtained from either of the following