

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

The Black Swift in Glacier National Park.—The Black Swift (*Nephoecetes niger borealis*) appears to be a rare bird in Montana. No record of its occurrence is given by Saunders in his list of Montana birds (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 14, 1921). In "Wild Animals of Glacier National Park: The Birds" (Nat. Park Service, 1918), Mrs. F. M. Bailey gives no record for this species, but indicates (p. 106) a possibility of its being seen on rare occasions. More recently I have published records of its occurrence at Libby (Auk, XLVII, 1930, p. 98) and in Glacier Park (*ibid.*, p. 98, and Bird-Lore, XXXIII, 1931, p. 175).

During the summer of 1931, I visited Glacier Park on four occasions, and observed Black Swifts twice. During a one-day visit on June 7, I observed three of the birds flying above McDonald Creek near the mouth of Avalanche Creek. On August 17, I traversed the length of the Garden Wall on the trail from Logan Pass to Granite Park, climbing to the summit twice, and descended from Granite Park to McDonald Creek Valley, without seeing a Black Swift. The next morning, however, I saw four birds of this species near Avalanche Lake. On two occasions later in the summer I was in Glacier Park for a few hours, but did not observe any Black Swifts.

The new A. O. U. Check-list (p. 177) questions the inclusion of Montana in the breeding range of the Black Swift. The records cited and described above indicate that it probably breeds sparingly in Glacier National Park.—WINTON WEYDEMAYER, *Fortine, Montana, January 14, 1932.*

A Station of Frequent Observation of the Cowbird in the San Francisco Bay Region.—The lower stretches of Coyote Creek between San Jose and San Francisco Bay provide an attractive region for the Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*, subspecies?). The stream here flows through the rich alluvial soil of the lower Santa Clara Valley, has built up the dikes characteristic of California streams in such places, and these in turn provide a luxuriant growth of cottonwoods, box elders, red willows and other trees, with a rank undergrowth of brambles, poison hemlock and other coarse herbs. Such a condition provides ideal breeding grounds for many small birds such as the Russet-backed Thrush, Song Sparrow, Traill Flycatcher, Willow Goldfinch, Pileolated Warbler and Yellow-throat. These breeding birds in turn provide hosts for the Cowbird. It was in this region that Smith (Condor, XXVIII, 1926, p. 245) located eggs of the Cowbird but did not observe adult birds. Since that time adult Cowbirds have been observed with some regularity on the Coyote about two miles above its entry into the salicornia marshes of the Bay and in the vicinity of the bridge over this stream on the cross-road connecting the towns of Alviso and Milpitas.

Males and females have been observed. The males have been clearly seen in gurgling flight and in full song; and at one time three of them sat and performed on telephone wires immediately over the heads of a group of us. Dates before me of actual observation of adult Cowbirds are as follows: July 8, 1930, one male in flight; July 19, 1930, three males immediately above our heads on telephone wires, one male in full song on a box elder tree; May 9, 1931, a pair; May 14, 1931, notes of two or three and a pair (male and female together); July 28, 1931, male, singing.—GAYLE PICKWELL, *State College, San Jose, California, November 4, 1931.*

Note on the Food of an Arizona Spotted Owl.—The Arizona Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis lucida*) may be classed as one of the rarer North American owls. In fact the references in literature to specimens collected or observed are few, while notes on this owl's food habits are almost lacking. E. S. Steele in 1927 recorded (Condor, XXX, 1927, p. 123) the capture of a young Arizona Spotted Owl near Reserve, New Mexico, and his observations upon its behavior. This owl readily preyed on the rats and mice while confined in a barn, and willingly accepted dead squirrel, chipmunk, rat or mouse from its captor's hand. So far as Mr. Steele was able to observe, its diet was entirely mammalian, the flesh of birds being scorned.

In contrast to these observations, there are records (Richardson, Condor, VIII, 1906, p. 57; Daggett, Condor, xv, 1913, pp. 40-41) of two Spotted Owls (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*) from the mountains in the vicinity of Los Angeles, California, that were cannibalistic. Each of the birds had eaten a Pigmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma californicum*) shortly before it was collected.

Another and entirely different type of food was found by the writer when he skinned and dissected an adult male Arizona Spotted Owl, which was secured at Rustler Park, Chiricahua Mountains, Arizona, on June 23, 1931, by E. H. Quayle, one of a party making collections in that region for the San Diego Society of Natural

History. A cursory field examination of the bird's stomach revealed that it was filled to distention with insects; so it was sewn up and preserved in alcohol. Later, the contents were segregated in the laboratory, and sent to the United States Bureau of Biological Survey, where, through the kindness of Mr. W. L. McAtee, it was determined that they consisted entirely of parts of at least seventeen noctuid moths of the genus *Agrotis*. There were also seven feathers in the mass, which, when dried and fluffed, proved to be breast feathers from the owl. This may have been due to the bird's preening itself, for it was molting and in very poor feather.

This specimen was killed from its perch in a fir tree about midnight by the aid of a powerful electric flash-light. This fact may have some bearing on the discovery of its insect diet, for there seems but little question that fragile fare of this sort would pass quickly through the digestive tract; and had the bird been killed from its day roost, its stomach would very likely have been found to be empty. This was the writer's former experience with spotted owls (Condor, xv, 1913, p. 229).—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, September 24, 1931.*

Bird Notes from the Upper Rio Grande Valley.—In June, 1930, I had an opportunity to study the waterfowl of the Rio Grande Valley at Socorro, New Mexico. Later, after reference to "Birds of New Mexico" and correspondence with Mrs. Florence M. Bailey, it was thought advisable to publish records of the ducks seen. Breeding localities and summer records for ducks in the state are not numerous and breeding grounds are confined mainly to lakes in Rio Arriba County and areas of the lower Pecos Valley. The following notes may be of interest.

New Mexican Duck (*Anas diazi novimexicana*). This duck is restricted in range, being found only in the Rio Grande Valley of New Mexico from Albuquerque south to El Paso, Texas. Seven of these black ducks were seen on a pond near the city limits of Socorro on June 12, 1930.

Cinnamon Teal (*Querquedula cyanoptera*). Five seen in a slough along the Rio Grande on June 12. This species has been recorded from many localities in the state but is not particularly abundant anywhere.

Shoveller (*Spatula clypeata*). This duck nests at Lake Burford, Rio Arriba County, and in the Pecos Valley near Roswell. I found a male and female on the Rio Grande, June 11.

Lesser Scaup (*Nyroca affinis*). Considered by Mrs. Bailey as a migrant and rare winter resident in the state. These birds were found in May and June, 1918, at lakes of northern New Mexico by Dr. Wetmore, but no definite nesting records were given. Near Socorro on June 12, 1930, I discovered a pair of these ducks but was unable to find proof that they were nesting there.

Ruddy Duck (*Erismatura jamaicensis rubida*). According to "Birds of New Mexico" this duck nests commonly in lakes in the northern part of the state, in the Pecos Valley and on the Carlsbad Bird Reserve. I found, on June 12, a female with six young, only a few days old, in a slough near Socorro.

On August 5, 1931, I was in El Paso, Texas, and was able to spend some time studying a colony of Great-tailed Grackles (*Megaquiscalus major macrourus*) along the river at the south side of the city. Several of the birds observed were young of the season. I was interested to find that this bird is rare in New Mexico and western Texas. All records given for New Mexico are from the southern part of the state along the Mimbres and Pecos rivers and the Rio Grande. One breeding colony was found in 1925 near Carlsbad, and birds have been taken at Las Cruces and have bred at La Mesa, New Mexico, thirty miles north of El Paso.—JAMES STEVENSON, *Los Angeles, California, December 21, 1931.*

The Wood Ducks in Napa County, California.—In the pioneer days the Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) was reported to have been exceedingly abundant in the upper reaches of the Napa River. The writer had never seen any here until the spring of 1925, when a flock of twenty-six was reported to be wintering in a small lake-like slough near the "Little Trancas." On March 6, 1925, I accompanied Dr. Harold C. Bryant to this spot, and at 6 p. m. Dr. Bryant identified three Wood Ducks which dropped into the water. A flock of pinioned domesticated mallards is now kept by an orchardist at this place, and a "large" number of Wood Ducks was reported there this fall. On November 12, between 5:30 and 6:00 p. m., the writer and Eagle Scout Wayne Boggs observed a flock totalling 60 or more which came in to the slough, and on November 13, I counted 48 individuals.—E. L. BICKFORD, *Napa, California, November 21, 1931.*