

The Baikal Teal Taken in California.—The State of California Division of Fish and Game received a communication from Mr. Frederick M. Johnson, San Mateo, California, on December 15, 1931, advising that on December 13 Mr. Johnson had killed a male Baikal Teal (*Nettion formosum*) on the grounds of the Toyon Duck Club, near Brentwood, Contra Costa County, California. Mr. Johnson further advised that the bird was flying with a flock of American Pintail (*Dafila acuta tzitzihoa*) when shot and appeared to be the only teal in the flock.

Mr. Johnson had the specimen preserved by Mr. Lockwood, of San Bruno, California, where I inspected it on January 8, 1932, and verified his identification. The specimen is one of an adult bird in nearly full plumage. Its wings and tail feathers are in perfect condition and do not show any excessive wear that might be expected if the specimen were an escaped aviary bird. Neither do the feet or soles show the usual thickening of captured birds. The specimen has every appearance of a wild bird, which I believe it was.

I wrote Mr. Johnson on January 8 in further regard to this specimen and suggested he present it to the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology for permanent preservation. This, I am very pleased to state, Mr. Johnson has generously agreed to do and the specimen will doubtless be catalogued there by the time this note appears in print.

Mr. Johnson wrote me on January 9, 1932, as follows:

"I had thought of the possibility of this bird being an escaped caged duck, but Mr. Nelson who takes care of the DeLaveaga collection [San Mateo, California] told me that to the best of his knowledge, Mr. DeLaveaga had the only four birds of this species in this country, and I saw all four in one of the pens. On top of this, our keeper at the Toyon Club told me that 'another duck that looked just like the one I killed' had been taken the next day. He, unfortunately, dressed the bird and put it with the rest of the bag, so I was unable to secure the specimen. There were thousands of northern birds on our grounds at the time, and the fact that there were two of this species killed in two days makes me believe that there is a great possibility that there were a few more around. I intend to watch very carefully next year and attempt to secure another specimen."

The A.O.U. Check-list, 4th ed., 1931, p. 48, provides but one record of this species' occurrence on the North American continent, that of a single male specimen secured by A. M. Bailey, at Wainwright, Alaska, September 2, 1921 (Bailey, Condor, xxvii, 1925, p. 169). Therefore the occurrence of this Asiatic species so far south on the Pacific Coast of North America is noteworthy.—JAMES MOFFITT, *Division of Fish and Game, 510 Russ Building, San Francisco, California, February 8, 1932.*

An Unrecorded Nesting Colony of Yellow-billed Magpies.—On April 3, 1932, while driving on the main road from Hornitos to Mariposa, Mariposa County, California, several Yellow-billed Magpies (*Pica nuttalli*) were seen two miles east of Hornitos, at an elevation of 1200 feet. On April 10, 1932, I returned to the vicinity with Mr. Ralph Anderson, Government photographer for Yosemite National Park, to gather more information on the colony. On that date we located twenty-two nests and saw at least as many magpies. All of the nests found were in the large Valley Oaks, *Quercus lobata*, which grow abundantly over the rolling hills in this region. Most of the trees chosen for nesting sites were the largest trees in the vicinity. The nests were located in the tops of these large oaks or near the ends of the branches, so that it proved difficult to climb to them. Magpies were seen in and about the trees containing nests and one was twice seen to enter a nest where the bird remained a few minutes. A small stream flows through the center of the colony but this dries up a little later in the season.

Mr. Chris Peterson, who owns a ranch upon which part of the colony is located, told us that he has lived there sixty-three years and that the colony has been there at least that long. He estimated the birds in the colony at two hundred and said that he knew of no other nesting magpies in the vicinity.

As far as I can learn this is the first time that Yellow-billed Magpies have been recorded from Mariposa County. It is encouraging that this colony occupies a sparsely settled region where the birds apparently can do little damage and will probably not be persecuted.—A. E. BORELL, *Ranger-Naturalist, Yosemite National Park, California, April 13, 1932.*