

"This is the first time I have found the Aleutian Tern nesting in colonies. Last year I found one nest with two eggs, but did not secure the bird; therefore I did not mention it to anyone. This nest was not found near this colony."

The discovery of this breeding colony is of particular interest in that previously the species was known to nest only on two small islands in Norton Sound (near St. Michael and near Kegikhtowik), on Kodiak Island, and near Yakutat in southern Alaska, and probably on or near Saghalin Island, Siberia. Bent (Life Hist. N. Amer. Gulls and Terns, 1921, p. 265) writes that the two colonies near St. Michael in Norton Sound contained in 1915 about 20 and 40 pairs of breeding birds, respectively. The Kodiak Island colony has long since disappeared; in fact, all that is known of it is that on June 12, 1868, Bischoff collected the type specimen and a single egg there; it has not been reported as breeding there since then. At Situk River flats, near Yakutat, Walker (Condor, 25, 1923, pp. 113-117) found only a few nests of this species although he saw a considerable number of the adult birds.

It appears, then, that, as far as present knowledge goes, the Goodnews Bay colony is the largest one known and constitutes the most important stronghold of the species. Bent has suggested that the Aleutian Tern is an Asiatic form which has extended its breeding range across to Alaska and has become "... temporarily or permanently established at a few isolated spots on the Alaskan coast." The newness of the Goodnews Bay colony (only one nest in 1932), and the present absence of the birds on Kodiak Island, bear out his idea of the temporary nature of the local establishment of this bird.

The eggs agree with other specimens in the United States National Museum and in the Bent collection. They had been incubated some days when collected, as they had small embryos in them. The date, June 6, is the earliest egg date I have found. Walker found eggs at Yakutat on June 12; Nelson's records for St. Michael range from June 23 to 28. The fact that the adult male was snared on the nest (and preserved) indicates that, as in many other laro-limicoline birds, the male plays some role in incubation.

Cryptoglaux funerea richardsoni (Bonaparte). Richardson Owl. One adult female, Goodnews Bay, Alaska, January 26, 1933. This bird was in sickly condition, and had a parasitic growth in its gizzard, according to Mr. Bull.

Motacilla flava alascensis (Ridgway). Alaska Yellow Wagtail. One adult male, Goodnews Bay, June 15, 1933.

Anthus spinoletta rubescens (Tunstall). American Pipit. One adult female, Goodnews Bay, June 12, 1933.

Seiurus noveboracensis notabilis Ridgway. Grinnell Water-thrush. One adult female, Goodnews Bay, June 11, 1933.

Passerculus sandwichensis alaudinus Bonaparte. Western Savannah Sparrow. One adult female, Goodnews Bay, June 15, 1933.—HERBERT FRIEDMANN, *Washington, D. C., August 15, 1933; published by permission of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.*

The Owl Peril on the Berkeley Campus.—A little before ten on the evening of July 7, I stopped beneath the great live oaks of Faculty Glade to locate a sound of tapping that came from among the lower branches. My scientific curiosity was promptly satisfied by a hard blow on the head, combined with the prick and scratch of claws. The sound had been bill-clapping, and a Screech Owl was defending its young, with a vengeance. It was astonishing that a small bird could strike so solid a blow without harm to itself.

I remained on the spot fifteen minutes. The little owl never struck hard again, but brushed my head dozens of times in the course of rapid swoops from the trees on one side of the path to those on the other. After the first assault, the bill-clapping was made in flight, starting about six feet before, and ending an equal distance beyond, the objective. While in the trees it used a single scolding note.

I searched the grove several ensuing evenings and concluded the brood was gone; but finally on the 17th a similar but less vigorous demonstration was repeated, during which the bird hardly came within a yard of my head. Finally, on the 26th, while the parent or perhaps parents were behaving in the same way, I held a white handkerchief aloft at full arm-stretch, and shook it lightly. Quick as a flash, an owl struck

at it and, to my amazement, carried it into the oak far above my head, where it caught, was relinquished, and hung like a captured battle-flag for several days. That evening I saw, against the faintly-lit sky, several movements of what were probably the young, higher in the branches of the same tree.

A series of attacks by owls on human beings was described in a sequence of letters to *Science*, beginning in the issue of November 1, 1929, page 429. The old belief, which I now remember hearing as a child in New England, that the owl mistakes human hair or a fur cap for the back of some smaller "fur-bearer" crops up again and again.

Was the tendency to attack sufficiently hair-triggered only in the earlier period, or did the bird learn that human skulls are too thick for its offensive equipment, and only strike again when an object, apparently alive, of attackable size was substituted?—THOMAS T. McCABE, *Berkeley, California, August 8, 1933.*

Late Nesting of the Olive-sided Flycatcher in the San Gabriel Mountains, California.—Mr. W. D. LaNiece of San Bernardino, brought to me on July 8, 1933, a fresh set of three eggs, together with the nest, of the Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Nuttallornis mesoleucus*). He had collected this on the previous day in the San Gabriel Mountains, near Wrightwood, about 6000 feet elevation, San Bernardino County, California.

The nest was far out on a downward sloping branch of a large yellow pine and about forty feet from the ground. The location had been discovered twelve days earlier by watching the birds go to the nesting site, but even the completed structure could not be seen from the ground. One of the eggs was perforated in removing it from the nest, the weights, in grams, of the other two were 3.93 and 3.69. This is the latest nesting date which I have ever seen recorded.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, July 16, 1933.*

White-throated Swifts at San Juan Capistrano.—To me, it is always interesting to learn of the persistence, or otherwise, of bird colonies. In the *Condor* (9, 1907, pp. 169-172) Mrs. Bailey published an article on the "White-throated Swifts at Capistrano." Recently I found that this colony of *Aëronautes saxatilis* was still nesting in the same places in the same old ruin of this wonderful old mission. On May 14, 1933, I found about ten pairs still living there, flying in and out over the visitors' heads.

The part of the ruin where the swifts are, is considered unsafe; it is roped off so that the visitors do not get to the part where the birds are. Naturally, this adds much to the sense of security on the part of the birds. But the birds can readily be seen by everyone as they pass in and out of the old church. There are a few eave swallows with them, usually.—M. P. SKINNER, *Long Beach, California, May 23, 1933.*

An Unusual Nesting of the Black-chinned Hummingbird.—Early in April, 1925, a female hummingbird was noticed flying in and out of our garage in Buena Park, California, when the door was left open. On April 11, investigation showed that she was starting a nest in a loop of small rope that hung from a small board that rested across the wall plates of the building. It was located about the center of the garage, and the loop hung about a foot above the top of the car. The sliding door of the garage was left open the greater part of each day, and on April 11 there was a small amount of plant down held in the bottom of the loop by spider web.

On April 12 and 13, I watched the bird at work on the nest and decided that she was a Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*), a common breeding bird in our vicinity, that usually nests in the large eucalyptus trees at elevations of thirty feet, or more, from the ground. Progress on the nest was slow, as the bird would not come to it when the car was in the garage, and it was not until April 24 that the first egg was laid. We were away from home during the next two days, leaving the garage door open, and on our return April 27, there were two eggs in the nest, but the bird refused to return to them while the car was in. By the evening of April 28, she had overcome her fear of the car and returned to the nest after it was in