

Nat. Hist., 55, 1926, p. 188) where Murphy found it "common along the coast and up the Guayas from January to March, 1925." To the north on the Pacific coast, Grinnell (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool, 32, 1928, p. 61) lists one "taken by Frazar at San Jose del Cabo, September 6, 1887," and ". . . another seen at the same place November 9 following." Recently the species has been found breeding on Salton Sea, California (Miller and van Rossem, Condor, 31, 1929, pp. 141-142).

It accordingly seems desirable to record a specimen (no. A518811) banded as a chick at Muskeget Island, Massachusetts, on July 13, 1930, by Miss Grace C. Meleney, which was found dead at Acajutla, El Salvador, on January 26, 1931.

This record has been included in the mimeographed monthly bulletin "Items of Interest" of the former Massachusetts Division of Ornithology, Department of Agriculture, but the record seems of sufficient importance to warrant formal publication.—FREDERICK C. LINCOLN, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., October 15, 1933.*

**An Occurrence of the Northern Black Swift off the Guatemalan Coast.**—On the evening of September 20, 1933, a black swift came on board the SS. Antigua, latitude 12° 52' N., longitude 91° 50' W., approximately eighty-four miles off the Guatemalan coast. The bird, which was uninjured, was secured by the vessel's master, Capt. W. A. Card, and by him presented to the California Academy of Sciences. It is now C. A. S. no. 38402. Upon examination the bird proved to be an example of the Northern Black Swift (*Nephoecetes niger borealis*). It was a female, and yielded the following measurements: wing, 160.0 mm.; tail, 50.5; culmen, 6.5; tarsus, 13.5; middle toe, 10.5. Since there is no authentic record of the occurrence of this bird south of southern Mexico (see Griscom, Bull. Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., 64, 1932, p. 195) this take is of decided interest.

From the same donor the California Academy of Sciences has also received specimens of the Socorro Petrel (*Oceanodroma socorroensis*), taken on May 12, 1933, latitude 9° 10' N., longitude 86° 04' W., and an example of the Galapagos Petrel (*Oceanodroma tethys*), on September 22, 1933, latitude 16° 45' N., longitude 100° 28' W. Although these occurrences do not extend the known range of either species, yet specimens from these positions are sufficiently rare to warrant note being made of their existence.—M. E. McLELLAN DAVIDSON, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California, September 30, 1933.*

**Yellow-billed Magpies in Captivity.**—My first acquaintance with a magpie was in August, 1930, in one of Mrs. Florence Eichwaldt's aviaries. Immediately I inquired where I could get one, but no one knew where. With this, I gave up thought of getting one, but "Maggie" as she is called, was always a source of interest to me. On every visit I made, I tried to get her to talk to me, and she sometimes would reward me with, "Hello Maggie."

On March 28, 1932, I had the very good fortune to find a colony of nesting Yellow-billed Magpies (*Pica nuttallii*), and my first thought was to raise some young birds. In the middle of May I took two of them, giving one to Mrs. Eichwaldt. After a great deal of work and worry we could boast of two fine birds. Since her other bird was named "Maggie," Mrs. Eichwaldt named her new one "Jiggs," while mine was called "Blackie."

My bird was later dubbed the "Ornery Black-bird" when her mischievous disposition began to show itself. We did not have a really safe aviary outdoors for her, so we kept her indoors for some time. This made her tame and she became a fine pet. Her career in the house was unequalled for mischief. She would hide anything she could lift, such as needles, nails, pins, buttons, money, trinkets and food of all kinds.

When the groceries came home she seemed to know the package of meat and promptly pecked a hole in it. She would eat till satisfied, and grab as big a mouthful as possible, hide it, and then come back for more. Cookies and biscuit dough topped the list of her favorite foods. When baking was started she had to be put out on the back porch, for if she was left in the kitchen there would be dough all over the house. Every time someone happened to go near one of her hiding places she was there to retrieve the article if it was uncovered and try to hide it in another place.

When a cat or dog would come into the house she would fly down, give it a vicious peck and dash away to safety. She would repeat this until the animal left or she was put out.

Of the three birds, Maggie and Jiggs are the only ones that talk. Maggie has quite a record vocabulary. She imitates all the parrots and the neighbors, and once in a while she sings. There are many amusing sayings accredited to her.

In April of this year we put all of the birds together to see if they would breed. They did not breed, but we had the good fortune of seeing them build a nest. Maggie and Jiggs were the ones that worked on it. The nest was made in an old nail keg, first a layer of sticks was put in the bottom. When we thought they had finished with this part we gave them a pan of mud. They went to work immediately, using their bills as trowels to work the mud. Then they swallowed as much mud as their bills would hold, waited for a few minutes and then went to the nest and disgorged it in the shape of a ring. Then they worked the mud into a cup shape with their bodies. After a thin layer of mud was laid they got some fine twigs and straws, and after working them in the mud they would put a layer of this in the nest, then another of mud. After two days of this they were such a sight, black couldn't be told from white. The birds then ceased work for a day and cleaned up. The following day they began again and lined the nest with a large amount of horsehair.

The most peculiar thing about it all is that as soon as the nest was completed they began to fight fiercely for possession of it. Because of this we have come to the conclusion that all of the birds are females.—GLEN VARGAS, *Route 3, Jensen Road, Hayward, California, July 27, 1933.*

**Nesting of the Western Robin in Solano County, California.**—The Western Robin (*Turdus migratorius propinquus*) has nested for several years in suitable parts of Napa County, which adjoins Solano County on the west, and I have been expecting to find this species nesting in the latter county for some time. Heretofore, the only evidences I have had of robins nesting in Solano County are: an adult on the lawn of the Vacaville High School in the early summer, date not recorded (about 1929); a pair of birds on the lawn of the Benicia City Park, several times in June, 1932; a young bird with spotted breast in my front yard at Benicia on July 31, 1932; an adult robin filling its beak with earthworms on my lawn many times in May and June, 1933; and an adult male on the lawn surrounding the Benicia Arsenal office building, on June 1, 1933.

My first actual sight of a nest, however, in this county was on June 15, 1933, when a typical mud structure of the robin was found by two boys and taken to the home of one of them where it was shown to me. One of the lads took me to the site where the nest was found—a crotch of a eucalyptus tree in our city park. The nest had been placed ten feet up and was well hidden by the bushy growth where the tree had been "topped." The young had left the nest when found.

The increase in the area devoted to green lawns has, I think, been the deciding factor in inducing some of the robins to stay here to nest.—EMERSON A. STONER, *Benicia, Solano County, California, July 19, 1933.*

**Problems in the Classification of Northwestern Horned Owls.**—Dr. L. B. Bishop has recently described a form of Great Horned Owl, *Bubo virginianus leucomelas*, based upon winter-taken specimens from the vicinity of Victoria, British Columbia (see Proc. Biol. Soc. Wash., 44, June 29, 1931, p. 93). Having occasion to refer to this account, it struck me as desirable to make comparisons with other specimens that were available, and in response to my request Dr. Bishop kindly forwarded the type of *leucomelas* and one other skin of the same sort. Comparison with my own material sufficed to show that the new name applied to the breeding Horned Owl of the Atlin region, British Columbia. It should be a source of satisfaction to Dr. Bishop that his published description contains the following statement: "These facts would indicate that *leucomelas* is a form of very limited distribution, and probably breeds east of the coast range in northern British Columbia, near where the ranges of *lagophonus* and *subarcticus* approximate."

This is all right so far as it goes, but I feel very strongly that we are still a long way from a proper understanding of the Horned Owl variants of the northwest,