

where the identification was made.—JOSEPH W. SEFTON, JR., *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, December 27, 1933.*

A Screech Owl Captured by a Snake.—An interesting incident was enacted near our house at the Parker Creek Experiment Station, Tonto National Forest, Arizona, on July 5, 1933. A heavy flapping of wings attracted our attention to an Arizona oak tree (*Quercus arizonica*) about five yards from the house. Approximately 12 feet from the ground, and quite close to the trunk, a snake over three feet long (probably *Pituophis catenifer rutilus*) hung suspended by its tail from a small dead limb. The large part of the snake's body was coiled once around a small owl, judged from its color and size to be a screech owl (*Otus asio cineraceus*). The bird struggled more and more feebly for three or four minutes, and finally was still.

When we shot the snake, its body grew slack, and its tail loosened its hold on the limb and began to slip. The owl freed itself and flew away, seemingly uninjured. The owl had apparently been roosting in the tree, and was "stalked" and caught by the snake. Dr. Walter P. Taylor was kind enough to give us the probable identification of snake and bird.—MRS. C. J. WHITEFIELD, *Young Route, Globe, Arizona, December 22, 1933.*

Coots Breeding in the Tucson Region, Arizona.—As there seems to be no published record of the American Coot (*Fulica americana americana*) breeding in southern Arizona, the following may be of interest. At Bingham's pond, about six miles northeast of Tucson, coots were present in small numbers through the winter of 1932-1933. This irrigation pond is about a fifth of a mile long, very narrow, and is divided by dykes into three sections. The middle section was heavily overgrown with bulrushes (*Scirpus occidentalis*). Here the coots found shelter. About a dozen were seen at various times during the winter and spring.

On May 10, 1933, two very small, downy young with the adults were seen in a clear space among the bulrushes. They were noted again on May 20, 21, 22, and 23, somewhat larger in size. Late in the forenoon of May 23, I surprised a pair of adults with five downy young, another brood. I captured two of the young, and after examining them, I turned them loose. They swam at once for the bulrushes and were soon out of sight. Downy young were seen from then on until June 5, usually one to three birds at a time. Sometimes as many as ten adults were seen. I believe at least three pairs nested during the summer.

Several downy young were also seen by Dr. C. T. Vorhies of the University of Arizona. He located one nest of typical coot construction. It contained no eggs.

On July 2 the pond was again visited and five adults with fifteen apparently full grown young, all in one group, were seen in the open area at the east end. Due to the dry weather the pond was being drained frequently and the number of coots gradually diminished. On August 10 only one was seen.

This pond has been in use for quite a number of years, so it seems probable that coots have nested here in previous summers. More extensive field work in southern Arizona in the summer months will no doubt reveal other breeding sites in irrigated districts.—A. H. ANDERSON, *Tucson, Arizona, October 7, 1933.*

An Arizona Nest of the Ferruginous Rough-leg.—*Buteo regalis* was reported as a nesting bird in Arizona by Dr. Alexander Wetmore (*Condor*, 35, 1933, p. 163) upon the evidence of two immature, captive birds at Cañon Diablo. However, I believe the following to be the first record of the eggs actually having been taken within the state.

The nesting tree was located April 15, 1926, in Williamson Valley, at approximately 4700 feet elevation, twenty-five miles north-northwest of Prescott. The nest, a large bulky structure almost four feet in diameter and over five feet high, was situated about thirty-five feet from the ground at the top of a cedar. It was built of dead cedar sticks of which there were three distinct layers. The color and condition of the sticks indicated that the bottom layer was the oldest, and that the other layers had been added during successive years. The nest was well cupped and lined with shredded cedar bark. This was not a case of repairing an old nest as the Red-tails frequently do, but of building new and complete nests, one on top of the other.

The eggs, three in number, and in my collection at the present time, were slightly

incubated. The behavior of the parents, while the eggs were being collected, was very much different from that of other large hawks of my experience. They circled continually overhead, uttered shrill cries, and dove twice to within a couple of feet of the nest.—E. C. JACOT, *Tucson, Arizona, October 19, 1933.*

The Status of *Phalaropus fulicarius jourdaini* Iredale.—Some years ago Mr. Tom Iredale described (Bull. Brit. Ornith. Club, 42, 1921, p. 8) a Palaearctic race of the Red Phalarope as being "separable at sight from the typical form (type-locality, Hudson Bay, North America) in the paler coloration of the edgings of the feathers on the back, scapulars, and tertials, . . . in the present form they are only creamy and appear appreciably narrower." The type was taken July 7, 1921, at Liefde Bay, Spitzbergen.

I have recently had occasion to inquire into the validity of Mr. Iredale's form, basing my studies chiefly on the material in the Museum of Comparative Zoology, supplemented by a series of ten breeding birds collected by Mr. George Miksch Sutton on Southampton Island, kindly loaned me by Mr. W. E. Clyde Todd of the Carnegie Museum, and specimens loaned by Dr. Van Tyne from the Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, comprising birds collected in June off the coast of Labrador, and breeding birds from the west coast of Greenland.

Laying out the material chronologically it is at once evident that the characters assigned to the proposed Palaearctic form have no taxonomic or geographic correlation but are the result of unusually rapid fading and wear. *Phalaropus fulicarius* carries its winter plumage well into the spring, but in most individuals nuptial dress is assumed by early May. Members of a long series taken off the Massachusetts coast at the time of the great flight between May 20 and 23, 1892, have the feathers of the upper parts broadly edged with shades between light ochraceous buff and ochraceous buff (females), or with ochraceous tawny (males). Birds from north-eastern Asia (Nishny Kolymsk and East Cape) and the northern coast of Alaska taken early in June (1-16) show a decided paling of these colors, as do specimens taken in Labrador June 12, Southampton Island June 12-16, the west coast of Greenland June 8-9, and the east coast June 8 and 20. At this season birds from Siberia are indistinguishable from those taken in Greenland. In the series from Siberia and Alaska I have been able to trace the progressive wear and bleaching up to the time that the first traces of winter plumage make their appearance about July 20; in fact by late June and early July the prevailing color of the upper parts is black with narrow white or creamy white edges.

It is quite obvious, therefore, that *jourdaini* based on worn breeding birds collected early in July is nothing more than a synonym of *P. fulicarius* and shows once more that comparisons based on noncomparable series are misleading and only create erroneous impressions.—JAMES L. PETERS, *Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 10, 1933.*

Second Record of the Red-billed Tropic-bird in Arizona.—On June 22, 1928, while in Pinery Canyon, Chiricahua Mountains, I called at the home of Mr. Frank H. Hands, who is always, as many well know, interested in the fauna, and helpful to visiting collectors. On this occasion Mr. Hands produced a mounted bird, of a species unknown to me, but which he presently informed me had been identified by Mr. J. Eugene Law as a Red-billed Tropic-bird (*Phaëthon aethereus*). Mr. Hands expressed a desire to present the specimen to the University of Arizona, and thus it came into our possession.

I later wrote to Mr. Law concerning this specimen and in the ensuing correspondence it was mutually agreed that he should publish the record of its occurrence. Before the record had been committed to print, however, occurred the regrettable passing of Mr. Law. In March, 1933, still having the matter in mind I communicated with Mrs. Law concerning the desirability of placing this record in the permanent literature. She graciously responded with a transcription of Mr. Law's notes and signified her desire that the record be published.

The essential facts are these. The bird was found on September 15, 1927, by Mr. Frank H. Hands and Mrs. Hands, alive, but apparently exhausted, in the road between the Dos Cabezos and Chiricahua mountains in "Apache Pass draw". Mr.