

on display at Hotel Barton, Willows. Other mounted specimens of this species were noted in several duck club lodges. It appears that this species may not be so rare in the Sacramento Valley area as the dearth of literature concerning its occurrence indicates.

Egretta thula. Snowy Egret. Several records of the occurrence of the Snowy Egret in the Sacramento Valley are at hand, and will be listed briefly. May 29, 1931, one, Plumas Lake, Yuba County; December 22, 1932, two, 3 miles east of Maxwell; March 2, 1933, one, 4 miles southeast of Willows; April 18, 1933, one, close to the last named place; June 6, 1933, two, in flooded rice-field 9 miles west of Gridley; November 27, 1933, one, on a gun club near Maxwell; December 26, 1933, five, feeding within a short distance of one another along a canal 4 miles north of Williams. Of these observations, that of December 22, 1932, was of especial interest, since it was just a few days after the end of a bitterly cold period. In every case listed these birds were in company with the larger American Egret and with other herons, so they could easily be compared in detail.

Elanus leucurus majusculus. White-tailed Kite. In 1932, I published a record of this species noted on Conoway Ranch, some miles west of Sacramento (Condor, 34, 1932, p. 259). New information is of interest. On November 16, 1933, Inspector W. G. Duncan, Agricultural Commissioner's office, Woodland, California, had occasion to traverse parts of this same ranch property. Under a willow tree about 1½ miles west of the place where the species was previously observed he found the well-preserved body of a White-tailed Kite, evidently shot the day before by pheasant hunters; its mate flew about overhead for some minutes before disappearing over the trees. The dead bird was delivered to Professor Hopkins, of the Esparto High School, for verification of the identification. Because of the proximity of the two localities, it does not seem at all impossible that the same pair of kites remained on and around that identical area for the period covered by the two records.—JOHNSON A. NEFF, *Bureau of Biological Survey, Sacramento, California, April 1, 1934.*

The Race of Cowbird in the San Francisco Bay Region.—In increasing numbers have the eggs of cowbirds been found in the San Francisco Bay region since their initial discovery in 1922 near Irvington, Alameda County (La Jeunesse, Condor, 25, 1923, p. 31; see also Grinnell and Wythe, *Pac. Coast Avif.* No. 18, 1927, p. 104). It is quite possible, too, that cowbirds were present in the region prior to 1922. For there are earlier reports, though not as authentic as could be desired; for example, of "Sagebrush Cowbird" from "Gilroy, California" in 1912 (Oberholser, *Bird-Lore*, 22, 1920, pp. 343, 344). At any rate, save for a vagrant of the race *artemisiae* taken on the Farallon Islands (Dawson, Condor, 13, 1911, p. 181) no adult specimen has been available from which to determine subspecific status.

Just now, through the vigorous and successful efforts of Mr. Henry W. Carriger, who of late years has collected many of the eggs of *Molothrus* in the Bay region, the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology has come into the possession of an adult pair of the birds. They were taken on May 26 and 27, 1934, within the eastern city limits of Oakland, Alameda County, and are preserved under Mus. Vert. Zool. nos. 64963-64. They show measurements, respectively, as follows: ♂, wing 106.3 mm., tail 73.5, tarsus 24.7, culmen 16.6, depth of bill at base 9.3, weight 39.2 grams; ♀, wing 90.5, tail 60.2, tarsus 22.3, culmen 13.3, depth of bill at base 8.3, weight 27.8 grams.

Molothrus ater californicus Dickey and van Rossem (Condor, 24, 1922, p. 208) was named from specimens from the southern (upper) end of the San Joaquin Valley. From the date of that description up to the present occasion I have been of the opinion that *californicus* is a fairly recognizable race, upon basis of the characterization given by its describers. However, doubts have lately been expressed by other persons. Friedmann (*Auk*, 44, 1927, pp. 504, 505) synonymizes *californicus* under *obscurus*; and the same author only this year (*Wilson Bull.*, 46, 1934, p. 28) reiterates his belief that it [*californicus*] is "the same as the Dwarf Cowbird." Willett (*Pac. Coast Avif.* No. 21, 1933, p. 156) expresses the same view, in part in the following words: "*Californicus* is apparently an intergrade between *obscurus* and *artemisiae*, somewhat nearer the former. The naming of intergrades is a practice that may be continued indefinitely and cannot but lead toward nomenclatural chaos. With this in mind, *californicus* is here included with *obscurus*, from which it differs very slightly."

Now, with the above opinions before me, and after an examination just made of all the molothrine material in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (166 skins) in connection with the Dickey-van Rossem description, I am compelled to conclude that *californicus* is not usefully recognizable, having been based upon a sort of mosaic of intergrades. Indeed, this situation is quite what the reader gathers from the remarks of the authors of this name, themselves. To re-state the case as I now see it, I could do no better than use the words quoted above from Willett.

To return to the two birds from Oakland, the measurements I give above show the female to be even smaller than the average of a Colorado River valley series (for measurements of this, see Grinnell, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 12, 1914, pp. 159-160). The male, however, is larger with respect to wing and tail than any Colorado River example, but is identical in size with specimens from Owens Valley, these latter clearly being intergradient between *artemisiae* and *obscurus*. As to coloration, the female is a bit more slaty in its dark tones than Colorado Valley examples, but the latter, even of approximately the same season, are obviously more worn; as is well known, progressing wear carries gray toward brown. I cannot see that the obscure, narrow streaking below is any more emphasized than in some southeastern birds. In the male the brown color of the head is darker than in most Colorado River males, and there is a faint iridescent "wash" over it; but I suspect that a little wear and fading from strong sunlight would reduce these features to a perfectly equivalent condition.

To repeat, then, the newly-acquired specimens from the San Francisco Bay region would seem to decide the name Dwarf Cowbird (*Molothrus ater obscurus*) as the one best to use for the race of that area along with western and southern California generally.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 10, 1934.*

The Cowbird Breeds in Berkeley.—On June 9, 1934, we captured a young Cowbird (*Molothrus ater obscurus*) near Sather Gate on the University of California campus. It was being attended by a Western Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*). To our knowledge this is the first record of the Cowbird in Berkeley and also the first record of the Western Flycatcher as a host for this species.

We first saw the Cowbird on June 8 in the trees bordering Strawberry Creek. While we were watching it the much smaller Western Flycatcher approached and fed it. Our attempts to capture the fledgling by hand were failures because the young bird flew too well. The Western Flycatcher was most solicitous of its charge, expressing alarm at our presence, driving away a Robin, a Titmouse, and some Bush-tits which were attracted by the fledgling's begging calls, and feeding it at frequent intervals. The flycatcher followed the Cowbird more often than the Cowbird followed the Flycatcher.

The fledgling was a male weighing 26.5 grams. Its gullet and stomach contained a mass of insect remains which included two ladybird beetlets and a syrphid fly. The specimen is now no. 64966 in the collection of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.—SETH B. BENSON and WARD C. RUSSELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 15, 1934.*

The Nesting of the Double-crested Cormorant at Lake Bowdoin, Montana.—Because of a recent inquiry about the breeding of Cormorants in Montana I am placing the following note on record. The first time I visited Lake Bowdoin, June 19 to 22, 1932, and the last time, June 18 to 23, 1933, we found ten or twelve pairs of Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus auritus*) nesting on Woody Island. Probably



Fig. 38. Nestling Double-crested Cormorants at Lake Bowdoin, Montana.