

the water, would arise and settle on the water in a different place. In addition to the flocks, there were hundreds of scattered individuals, all headed north. I am unable to name the species, as I had no facilities for collecting, but can state that by far the majority of the petrels were all black, probably Socorro Petrels (*Oceanodroma socorroensis*) or Black Petrels (*Oceanodroma melania*) or both. A few of the birds, perhaps not one in a hundred, showed white on the rump, and still fewer seemed to be gray with white on the rump.—J. W. SEFTON, JR., *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, August 21, 1934.*

**A Race of *Porzana flaviventer* from Central America.**—This tiny rail has long been known from the Guianas, from the larger Antillean islands, and has recently been detected in the Magdalena district of Colombia. It remains one of the rarest of birds in collections and certainly has never been detected before anywhere on the mainland north of Colombia.

On August 19, 1925, at Lake Olomega in eastern El Salvador, one of these rails was shot when it fluttered from under foot as I was working an area of foot-deep water covered with a mat of floating water hyacinth and dotted with clumps of mimosa. Several others were seen from time to time, usually only for brief moments, but it was not until I revisited the lake in April, 1926, that I succeeded in collecting another specimen. Both of the birds taken are males; the one collected on August 19 was evidently breeding, while the spring bird (April 8) was sexually dormant.

These two specimens had never been studied critically until the present time. That they would prove to be a distinct race was almost a foregone conclusion in view of the geographic variations already known and the remoteness of El Salvador from the other areas inhabited by the species. This race, which is named for Dr. Casey A. Wood, may be known as:

*Porzana flaviventer woodi*, new subspecies.

*Type.*—Male adult in breeding condition, no. 15513 Dickey collection; Lake Olomega, Department of San Miguel, El Salvador, August 19, 1925; collected by A. J. van Rossem, original number 8583.

*Subspecific characters.*—Size small as in *Porzana flaviventer hendersoni* Bartsch of Hispaniola and Porto Rico; color nearest to the Antillean races (*hendersoni* and *gossii*), but crown (in males at least) paler, pectoral region whiter, median upper parts browner (less blackish), dorsal white markings narrower and less extensive, and black loreal streak only 1 mm. wide instead of (as in all other races) 2 mm. Measurements of the type are: wing, 60.5 mm.; exposed culmen, 15.8; tarsus, 20.4; middle toe without claw, 27.0.

*Range.*—Known only from Lake Olomega, El Salvador.

*Remarks.*—The El Salvador race is certainly closer in color to the Antillean than to the two South American races, *flaviventer* Boddaert and *bangsi* Darlington. South American birds are predominantly black and white dorsally, while the Antillean races are brown and black with rather prominent white streaking. The brown extreme (of *gossii* and *hendersoni*) is close to *woodi* in the reduction of black, but no specimen examined is as narrowly streaked as are the two from El Salvador, in which dorsal white streaking is reduced to thread-like lines.

As regards the color of soft parts, the tarsi and feet of *hendersoni* are, according to a field tag by Dr. W. L. Abbott attached to a specimen (U. S. Nat. Mus., no. 251398) from Haiti, "pale brownish green." The tarsi and feet of *gossii* are recorded on the field tags of several Jamaican specimens taken by J. E. Sherlock as "brown" in six cases and "greenish yellow" in one case. Chubb (*Birds of British Guiana*) records the tarsi and feet of *flaviventer* as "yellowish." The colors of soft parts of the two El Salvador specimens were noted by myself in the field as follows: tarsi and feet pale dull yellow in both; bill blackish olive in one, dark olive in the other; iris dark red in one. It would appear, therefore, that the colors of soft parts in this species may be of subspecific value. Because of the apparent agreement in the color of the feet and legs of *flaviventer* and *woodi*, it is not at all certain that the relationships of the Central American colony lie as near to the Antillean races as the general plumage coloration might lead one to infer.

In the assembled series of this species there is a slight difference in color between

the sexes, a point which apparently has not previously been noticed. Males have the pileum and hind neck darker and more slaty; females are browner in this respect, and with the dark area less extensive. These differences are rather noticeable in *gossii* and *hendersoni*, less so in *flaviventer* and *bangsi*.

Material is gratefully acknowledged from the Museum of Comparative Zoology and the United States National Museum. It is distributed as follows: *flaviventer*, Surinam, 2; *bangsi*, Colombia, 2; *gossii*, Cuba, 5, Jamaica, 8; *hendersoni*, Haiti, 3 including the type, Porto Rico, 1.—A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California, June 30, 1934.*

**Nests of the Townsend Solitaire.**—While doing intensive field work for the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1931, I experienced the good fortune of finding four nests of the Townsend Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*). These nests were all located on the headwaters of Guernsey Creek, sixteen miles east of Mineral, California.

As I walked slowly up a gradual slope on a ridge covered with both sugar and yellow pine, a solitaire flushed from almost beneath my feet. It fluttered on the ground for about twenty-five feet and then slipped off without uttering any noise. I found the nest near-by on the ground and within an open "catface" or fire scar of a small yellow pine. It was protected by the tree on three sides. The nest was made of grass, with a diameter of about four inches. Three young birds in the nest were without feathers. This was on June 29. As we were passing over a large territory that day I was forced to leave the site without making further observations. The elevation was approximately 5100 feet.

The next day while climbing a cliff about 200 feet lower than the above-mentioned elevation I discovered a solitaire's nest in the crevice in the cliff. The nest was almost inaccessible without ropes. The crevice was about thirty feet above a steep talus slope that gradually tapered off, until it was replaced by a mixed conifer forest that was separated in the center of the valley by the main highway. The crevice was so difficult to reach that I could not ascertain whether there were eggs or young in the nest.

On July 17 I again found a solitaire's nest in a niche in a cliff that rose fifteen feet vertically from a talus slope that headed a small dry draw. The elevation was approximately 4650 feet. The bird slipped off the nest without a sound and flew, rather nervously but silently, from one tree branch to another. These perches always commanded a view of the face of the cliff and the nest.

My fourth solitaire's nest was in a very picturesque location. It was located on the ground under a boulder that formed a roof over it, the boulder being partly exposed on a steep slope. The nesting site was surrounded by firs and pines that towered silently above a spring which made the small canyon, surrounded by cliffs, a sight that would make the most calloused mountaineer want to linger a moment.

The nest was three and one-half inches in diameter, and constructed of pine needles. There were two young birds in the nest. They had brownish down and red bodies with a black stripe down the back. It took many hours of patient watching to locate this fourth nest. The silent solitaires, flying from branch to branch, watching me, an intruder, made the silence of the woods more silent, and left an impression that will long be remembered.—ARTHUR F. HALLORAN, *Berkeley, California, January 9, 1934.*

**The American Knot in the San Francisco Bay Region.**—The American Knot (*Calidris canutus rufus*) is a rather uncommon migrant in the San Francisco Bay area, particularly in the spring months. In general, it occurs in limited numbers or singly. It was a distinct surprise, therefore, to find Knots in numbers, this May, along the bay shore of Alameda and Contra Costa counties, California. Groups of from six to thirty individuals, aggregating about one hundred birds, were found along a mile of mud flat between Fleming and Isabel Points, from May 4 to 11, 1934. This region lies within the city limits of Albany, Alameda County, and El Cerrito, Contra Costa County.

The Knots flocked mainly in the company of Western Sandpipers (*Ereunetes mauri*), Red-backed Sandpipers (*Pelidna alpina sakhalina*), and Sanderlings (*Croce-*