

gulls have been attacking the cherries I do not know, nor do I have any definite information as to just how widespread the damage is."

It is reported that almost countless cherry stones can be seen near the nesting sites on the various islands of Great Salt Lake where the California Gull (*Larus californicus*) nests. A report from Davis County states that in addition to knocking the cherries to the ground, the gulls flop down in the tops of cherry trees, with outspread wings supporting their weight, and devour all fruit within reach.

This new food habit seems to have been developed largely as the result of an increased gull population and consequent greater competition for the limited food supply.—CLARENCE COTTAM, *U. S. Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., February 12, 1935.*

**Another Winter Record of the Townsend Warbler in Portland, Oregon.**—On January 11, 1935, a male Townsend Warbler (*Dendroica townsendi*) was found dead in a small park near Chapman School in Portland, Oregon, by Ruth Russell Du Bois. This constitutes the fourth winter record of this species for Oregon. The first bird, found on January 13, 1928, was recorded by Gabrielson and Jewett (*Pacific Coast Avifauna* no. 19, 1929, p. 40) and the second and third, January 12, 1931, and January 13, 1932, were reported by Jewett (*Condor*, 34, 1932, p. 190).

It is worthy of note that the birds were found on almost identical dates of the various years, that is, January 13, January 12, January 13, and January 11. A further item of interest is that the first, third, and fourth birds were found by Mrs. Du Bois under the same small grove of fir trees.—H. M. DU BOIS, *Portland, Oregon, January 24, 1935.*

**Random Notes on Raptors at Florence Lake, California.**—My limited acquaintance with the raptors may prove of interest to those who may be compiling economic data for or against these birds. Personally there is one of this family that visits Florence Lake, Fresno County, California, that I come as nearly hating as it is possible for me to despise any of Nature's children. That is the Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter velox*). And I am grateful for the fact that they come to plague me for a few days only, in September.

Sometimes a single one will turn our usually peaceful bird haven into utter chaos. More often, there are several of them together, as many as six sharp-shins having been here at the same time. While they remain it matters not what luckless bird shows itself on the feeding ground, the sharp-shin drops on it, grasps it out of mid-flight or eventually gets it when it seeks safety in a tree. From dawn until dark these bloodthirsty fellows snatch our pets. A few have paid the penalty, but more often they escape Mr. Lofberg's aim.

Chickadees, juncos, Brewer Blackbirds, Robins and Blue-fronted Jays are the birds that are here at the time, to be preyed upon. Whether the Clark Nutcrackers are wiser or their size intimidates this hawk, I do not know. Whatever the reason, the nutcrackers go about unmolested.

For several years we had chickens. In December or January of those years, a Western Goshawk (*Accipiter atricapillus striatulus*) would try to catch a chicken—and occasionally succeed. The hens would give their danger call and I would grab Mr. Lofberg's revolver and hurry out. I would merely shoot a hole in the air, the report frightening me quite as much as it did the goshawk, yet the bird would hasten away. Every eleven days, during the time the goshawk was in the vicinity, this comedy would be re-enacted. Over a period of six years we know the goshawk killed four of our chickens. Two of these I was able to retrieve for our own use, as I arrived at the kill. But the other two were partially eaten when I arrived on the scene. Even so, I hold no particular grudge against these birds. With the goshawk, creatures do have an even chance; but with the sharp-shin, they are doomed the moment the sharp-shin sees them. Or so it seems to me.

Apparently the goshawk did not prey on our birds. Jays and nutcrackers set up a clamor when this hawk was near and they would flock above it. The other birds sought cover. But I never saw it bothering any of them, and since we disposed of the chickens the goshawk no longer comes at all.

Two pairs of Golden Eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*) spend a long summer season near Florence Lake. One pair apparently has a nest on the dikes two miles north of us, though I have been unable to locate their aerie. They hunt over Lower Jackass

Meadow. The other pair has a nest on Florence Rock, a sizable butte at the upper end of the lake and about two miles south of our house. For years I have made many trips each spring to watch them. Their nest is on a ledge, with an overhanging rock roof, and is quite inaccessible. Before the lake begins to fill there is a point in the lake bed where I can get a good view of this nest, with the binoculars. Eventually this high point becomes submerged and many times I have reluctantly brought my last call to a close because the water drove me from the topmost rock. This usually happens at the time that the eagles are bringing food to their young and there my observation must stop because the nest cannot be seen from any other dry spot. The only food I have been able to identify has been snakes and ground squirrels.

The most interesting thing that has occurred while I watched has been their aerial circus. Whether this occurs more than once a year I cannot say, but I have never seen it more than on one day during the season. A distant call first attracts my attention. This comes from a mere dot in the sky. The second bird then leaves its perch on the nesting ledge and soars in wide circles, upward. Before it can attain the height of its mate, the "dot" comes hurtling down with closed wings, at a terrific speed. When not over a hundred feet from the ground and just as I am sure it will be dashed to pieces, out come the wings and this bird instantly goes into a series of daredevil stunts. It rolls, stands on its head or tail, or slides earthward sidewise, with extended wings. Between these it may perform flights that remind me of a skater cutting figures on the ice. When it has exhausted its repertoire it ends on a line with the nest. But instead of flying straight to it, the eagle makes three perfect loops in the air, coming out of the last within a couple of flaps (of the wings) of the ledge.

Meanwhile the one in the air has been forgotten entirely but soon the faint call reminds me to look upward to find that it, too, has become a dot. Upward starts the resting eagle. Down comes the distant one to go through the same routine. Always these flights end with those three loops that bring them onto the nesting ledge. For an hour or more they continue this exciting sport. Then the one on the ledge fails to heed the call and remains until the other has alighted beside it. Then off they fly together toward Blaney Meadow, about five miles to the southeast of their home. This seems to be their particular feeding ground.

This spring, being a shut-in, I have not been able to do any hiking, whatsoever. I bemoaned the fact that I would not get to see any of my eagles, as I had never seen either pair near our home. Whether by accident or design, twice my Florence Rock pair has come to call on me. As they soared over the house they gave their calls which advised me of their nearness and I got to see them.

The Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius*) I have seen more frequently and constantly than any other raptor. Early in March a pair arrives to spend a few weeks near the house. Very likely they do this because we are situated in a sunny, open space, and insects and rodents come out here earlier than at their real summer abiding places. Many times we have severe weather after they arrive and at such times they invariably prey upon a few birds at the station. Blue-fronted Jays and Red-winged Blackbirds (males only here at the time) are the species they have caught in our yard. If they have caught any of the other species we have not seen them.

Since Sparrow Hawks prey upon our guests only at a time when they must be desperately hungry, we have not resented their doing so. Later, when insects and rodents become plentiful, I have never seen the Sparrow Hawk molest a single bird. In fact many times I have seen a Meadowlark (adult or young), Yellow Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow, Mountain Bluebird, or other meadow dwelling bird, perched in the same tree with one of these hawks, with neither one nor the other showing concern or fear.

About ten o'clock one February night we could not imagine just why our only neighbor, a bachelor, should be sharpening a saw. We were more curious when he seemed to be making a regular practice of so doing. Before we thought to ask him about it, we discovered a small owl on our back steps. We did not know grown owls could be so small as that one and thought it must be a youngster. However, the bird key showed *Lechusa* (Spanish for owl) to be a Saw-whet (*Cryptoglaux acadica*) and then the cause of the saw sharpening became clear to us.

In the years that followed (1929-33) we could judge our coldest spell of the winter by *Lechusa's* arrival. This coldest period may be at any time from late December until late February. But whenever we found *Lechusa* perched at our back door, after dark, we knew the fires would require extra stoking. White-footed mice attracted the

owl to that particular perch. On the coldest mornings she would continue to rest there on the walk, with her back as close to the porch door as possible. We thought it must be for the heat that came from the house, and thereafter placed an oil stove just inside that canvassed door. Ofttimes *Lechusa* remained until noon, and if we needed anything out that way we simply waded snow clear around the house, rather than disturb our cunning guest.

So long as we made no attempt to touch her she allowed us to come very close. She would look up through her eyebrows like a bashful child. One evening she was in a shed and I captured her, expecting my hands to be torn to shreds. But *Lechusa* made not a single effort to mutilate me. I presented her with band number A238126 and continued to play with her for an hour or so. She seemed to be thoroughly enamored when I stroked her head.

Our police force (Blue-fronted Jays and Nutcrackers) always scolded when she was about, but only once did we see her bother any of the birds. Then it was one of the jays that she caught about two o'clock in the afternoon of a bright, clear day. We could scarcely believe our eyes. As she carried that jay to a tree it looked twice as large as its bearer.

This past winter (1933-34) we had no sub-zero weather. Nor did *Lechusa* come near us. We hope the weather was the reason for such neglect rather than that she is no more.

There are other hawks and owls that spend more or less time in the vicinity of Florence Lake, but so far they have evaded identification. The hawks have been too high for binoculars to reveal characteristics, or the bones too lazy to crawl out of bed to go looking for the owner of the hootings, which we know to be those of owls; but which ones we have not yet the slightest idea.—LILA M. LOFBERG, *Florence Lake, Big Creek, California, May 5, 1934.*

**Vermilion Flycatcher Increasing in Coachella Valley, California.**—Since I first found the Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus mexicanus*) breeding in Coachella, California, in 1928 (Condor, 31, 1929, p. 75), it has been my good fortune to visit the vicinity frequently. It will be gratifying to all bird lovers to learn that these gorgeous beauties have now increased until they are not uncommon. I have seen over a dozen within a few hours on several occasions. A number of nests with eggs, as well as old nests, have been observed, and on March 25, 1934, I saw several young birds which could fly, although still being fed by the old birds. A female was on a nest containing two fresh eggs on March 3, 1935, while the male bird was perched about fifty feet away.

All of the ranchers with whom I have talked have noticed the birds, although some of them do not know them by name, and seem to be as anxious as I am to have them increase.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, March 11, 1935.*

**Lewis Woodpecker in Death Valley.**—About sunrise on October 25, 1934, several Lewis Woodpeckers (*Asyndesmus lewisi*) were observed on the golf course on Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley, California. These birds, five or six in number, were perching on fence posts along the edge of the grassy area and were not very active at such an early hour. They allowed me to approach quite near before flying to other posts. I can find no published posts. I can find no published record of the Lewis Woodpecker in Death Valley and believe that this adds one more species to the list of that region.—JOHN MCB. ROBERTSON, *Buena Park, California, January 25, 1935.*

**Is the Northwestern Robin Migratory?**—The breeding range of the Northwestern Robin (*Turdus migratorius caurinus*) is given in the fourth edition of the A. O. U. Check-list (1931, p. 256) as "from Glacier Bay, Alaska, south through the Pacific coast region of British Columbia and Washington." Nothing is said as to whether this race is resident within its breeding range or whether its population in whole or in any part migrates for the winter season more or less distance to the southward. Brooks and Swarth, however, say (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 17, 1925, p. 123) on this score: "Probably permanent resident over much of its habitat; certainly so in the southern part of Vancouver Island . . . and on the southern mainland coast [of British Columbia]."

Referring now to California, Dawson (Birds Calif., 1923, p. 760) ascribed *caurinus*