

**Noon-day Feeding of the Pacific Nighthawk.**—At midday, June 2, 1934, I was hunting along Indian Creek, some two miles southeast of Riddle, Owyhee County, Idaho. The sky was clear. The full rays of the summer sun had caused a subsidence in the activities of the birds, save for two Pacific Nighthawks (*Chordeiles minor hesperis*). They were actively zig-zagging over the creek, evidently in pursuit of insects. To me they seemed out of place. One male, now number 619 in my private collection, came within range of my gun and I collected it. I was curious to see what the bird had been feeding on at that time of day; so the stomach, well gorged with insects, was preserved.

Upon my return here, Dr. Edwin C. Van Dyke, Professor of Entomology at the University of California, kindly identified the insects with the following results:

Predaceous water beetles: *Colymbites* sp., numerous; *Agabus* sp. one or two.

Water scavenger beetles: many *Tropisternus lateralis*; many *Enochrus* sp. and other small species; many *Sphaeridium scarabaeoides*, a manure feeding species.

Burying beetles: *Silpha bituberosa*, a single specimen.

Dung beetles: one *Aphodius fimetarius* and two *Aphodius vittatus*.

Rove beetles: one *Creophilus maxillosus villosus*.

Grasshoppers: one hind leg of *Melanoplus* sp.

To sum up, the food of this nighthawk, at the time it was shot, consisted of aquatic and scavenger beetles and one grasshopper.—WILLIAM B. DAVIS, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, February 8, 1935.*

**The Mexican Turkey Vulture in the United States.**—During the summer of 1933 Mr. Frank M. Setzler, Assistant Curator of Archeology in the U. S. National Museum, obtained a small collection of bird bones in excavations on the old Moorehead Ranch, twenty-two miles west of Comstock, Texas, in what is known as Bell Cave, located on the east canyon wall of the Pecos River one and one-half miles above its mouth. The age of the deposit has not been certainly determined except that it is prehistoric, possibly one thousand years or more old.

The broken pelvis of a Turkey Vulture found in this collection is of particular interest as it is that of the Mexican form, *Cathartes aura aura*, which has not been known within the United States except from Pleistocene deposits in Florida. *C. a. aura* in its skeleton, when compared with the two northern subspecies *C. a. septentrionalis* and *C. a. teter*, is marked by diminutive size. The total length of the Bell Cave pelvis measured between proximal and distal surfaces of centra is 70.3 mm. It includes 13 ankylosed vertebrae. A specimen of *C. a. aura* from Matamoras measures 73.2 mm. and includes 14 vertebrae. Five *C. a. septentrionalis* from Maryland and Virginia range from 84.0 (14 vertebrae) to 91.5 mm. (15 vertebrae). Dr. Alden H. Miller has kindly given me measurements from nine specimens of *C. a. teter* from California and Nevada that range from 79.0 (14 vertebrae) to 86.6 mm. (15 vertebrae). While *teter* averages slightly smaller than *septentrionalis* it is decidedly larger than the specimen of *aura* from Matamoras.

Variation in the number of vertebrae in the sacral region is interesting. The fact that the Bell Cave pelvis includes only 13 vertebrae might at first thought seem to explain its small size, but comparison of specimens shows that this is not true. While total length of the pelvis is naturally affected by the number of ankylosed vertebrae, the Texas specimen is so far below the range of size for *C. a. teter* that another vertebra added to it would still throw it with the smallest of the three subspecies. Further, it is decidedly smaller in all its dimensions when compared with northern specimens.

Associated with the pelvis from Bell Cave is a fragment of an ulna of *Cathartes* that is too broken to be of particular significance. There are also some bones of the Ferruginous Rough-leg (*Buteo regalis*), another species of hawk of the genus *Buteo* that cannot be identified, and some bones of the Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), all apparently of equivalent prehistoric age. The sternum of a Lesser Scaup Duck (*Nyroca affinis*) from its appearance is probably less ancient.

The presence of remains of the Mexican Turkey Vulture in these cave deposits indicates the desirability of collecting a series of these vultures along the Rio Grande. No skins are available from this area so far as I am aware, and it is possible that the Mexican race may range regularly within the United States, especially along the lower course of the river.—ALEXANDER WETMORE, *U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C., January 29, 1935.*