

of Glaucous-winged Gulls on the water and on the beach a hundred feet below, when a large gull with pale-colored mantle and white primaries alighted among them. Swimming about in constant activity it frequently elevated its wings and I was startled to see (through 6X binoculars) that on the two outermost primaries of each wing about four inches from the top were dusky areas conspicuous against the otherwise immaculate surface of these feathers. These markings could be detected also when the wings were folded. The tail was pale fawn-color, faintly mottled, this and the streaked head being the only indications of immaturity noted. The mantle was pale bluish-gray. This bird moved about on the water for five minutes or so; then, taking wing and circling several times over the flock of gulls below, it passed within twenty-five yards of my hiding place, thus providing a different aspect of the wings from that obtained while the bird was at rest. It clearly was observed that the dusky wing markings were not an extraneous stain such as contact with crude oil might have caused. After alighting on the water again and resting there for a short time the bird again arose and flew to a small reef 200 yards away. There it could be seen, conspicuously large and light-colored among a gathering of Glaucous-winged Gulls, with head relaxed between the shoulders as if ready for an extended rest. Anxious to secure this specimen I made haste to return in a boat with my gun, but a fisherman just ahead of me put the gulls to flight and I never saw the bird again, although for a week afterwards each gathering of gulls was carefully scanned.

At the time, it was thought, and I still am of the opinion, that the bird in question answered to the description of the Nelson Gull, *Larus nelsoni*; but lacking the proof there is no intention of recording it as such.—J. A. MUNRO, *Okanagan Landing, B. C., July 20, 1934.*

The English Skylark on Vancouver Island.—Sentiment for the homeland has prompted the transplanting of things that had somehow taken root in our hearts when years were longer and life was at the Spring. Maybe it is only a prairie flower, or a long-remembered race of beans that climbed to the skies on the old homestead and hung heavy with pods of infinite tenderness. Really, the writer, twice in the present planting season, has had offered him a handful of beans whose kind had been the family stay in lands remote, when grandfathers were barefoot boys and dutifully dropped the seeds for their sires to cover with the hoe.

But sometimes it is birds, whose nests clung to the thatched eaves or whose song filled the unforgettable summer days. There have been many attempts to perpetuate memories of the homeland by the introduction of these feathered friends into the transplanted settlements of our country, some of them succeeding measurably well, some of them too well. We are all familiar with the English Sparrow, which came whether he wished to or not and stayed whether we liked its kind or would have them hence. And more recently the European Starling, coming by request and connivance, has perched all over our eastern landscape and promises to be gone nevermore. In this connection we will be pardoned for a hint of sympathy with the Chinaman who may or may not have released the Crested Mynahs of the Orient in his gardens on the Fraser River delta. In his heathen heart may have stirred something of the same longings that fill the soul of the transplanted European.

Most of the many attempts to introduce the European song birds of romance and story into our land have resulted in failure, or but temporary success; this, dare we say, partly by reason of their finer spiritual qualities that ill adapt them to competition and strife in new surroundings. The English Skylark itself has failed in several instances where its introduction had been carefully and hopefully planned. In fact, from present knowledge of the matter, faithfully gleaned, the colonization of skylarks in the district about Victoria, B. C., is unique in its success—so far. For no other attempt at introduction of the bird into America has attained the goal of permanent residence. Perhaps the distinctively English countryside about Victoria and the evident sympathetic regard of the transplanted Briton for the skylark has made the bird feel more at home there than elsewhere on our continent. In some American minds and policies there is strong sentiment against mingling avifaunas, even though the introduction were safe and sane from a biological standpoint.

At any rate, about 100 pairs of English Skylarks (*Alauda arvensis*) were liberated on the southern end of Vancouver Island in the fall of 1903. Ten years

later a second lot of 49 birds was released in the same locality. And they seem to have come to stay; for we have found them apparently as common as any native bird in the districts about the low elevations known as Mount Tolmie and Mount Douglas. There we were privileged to wander through the lanes and across the meadows twice this spring, late in March and again in the present month of May. On both occasions we had no difficulty in sighting and hearing satisfactory numbers of skylarks, if satiation may be had of anything so new under the American sun and so pleasing to sense and storied memory.

The larks were there, rising from green meadows in circling flights of song; not an outpouring of clear-cut, voluble notes at Heaven's gate, as we had been led to anticipate, but an offering of trills and warbles as a bird rose to bear its song aloft and bring back another. There is nothing startling or vivid about it, but rather something of wistful cadence that is gained or lost with the shifting of the breeze or the ever changing height of the singer. We had been advised that the better view of the skylark's song flights might be had by lying on one's back in the sweet meadow grasses. This, we concluded, would be undignified, maybe unhealthy. So we listened, as did the peasant girl of the art studio offering, with mouth agape and heart athrill. Sometimes we lost the singer to vision, but never for certain the song, until the aerial vocalist dropped suddenly down to the grass again to assure his mate that he really meant it all.—THEO. H. SCHEFFER, *Puyallup, Washington, May 20, 1935.*

The Charleston Mountain Blue-fronted Jay at Castle Dome, Yuma County, Arizona.—During a week spent at Castle Dome, Yuma County, Arizona, for the purpose of collecting topotypical pocket mice for the San Diego Society of Natural History, a member of the writer's party, S. G. Harter, secured a Charleston Mountain Blue-fronted Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri percontatrix*) on April 18, 1935. The specimen was submitted to A. J. van Rossem, who described *C. s. percontatrix* (Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., VI, 1931, p. 328), and he identified it as of this form. The presence of this forest-inhabiting bird far from its normal habitat, in an arid, rocky, Lower Sonoran desert, is another example of individual wandering that is responsible for many unexpected records. This specimen, an adult female, is now number 17062 in the collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, June 17, 1935.*

Bush-tits "Shadow-boxing."—On the afternoon of March 6, 1935, I was told by my mother that two small birds had been pecking the glass of the double windows of the living room of her home in Buena Park, California. They had started in the early morning and had returned at frequent intervals during the day. I watched for a few minutes and the birds returned, proving to be Coast Bush-tits (*Psaltriparus minimus minimus*).

The lower halves of the windows are screened, but the upper halves are not, and several branches of a bignonia vine have grown across them only a few inches from the glass. These were used as perches by the birds as they pecked vigorously at their reflections in the glass. The tapping of their blows was surprisingly loud and could be heard throughout the house. Sometimes they fluttered against the glass, but usually they used the vines as perches while they delivered a rapid succession of blows at their supposed antagonists. Going outside, I found that from a distance of about fifteen feet the reflection of the birds was very clear, as the comparative darkness of the room made a mirror of the glass. From inside of the room I found that they paid no attention to my extended hand until it was within six inches of them.

The birds would retire to a lime tree a short distance from the house, feed a while, then fly to a large bignonia vine at the corner of the porch, then back to the windows and begin pecking again. Both birds engaged in the battle and I could see no difference in the intensity of their efforts. They kept it up until almost dark that evening.

The next day, and for many days, they were constant attendants at the windows. By March 21, it was noticed that most of the time only one bird came. On the afternoon of March 25, the single bird, presumably the male, came to the windows