

with the stomach contents. On first seeing the sandpipers, we had thought they might be seeking gravel on the pavement, but we found that there was practically no loose gravel on the asphalt.

On the west approach road, where there were no sandpipers, flies also were practically absent, due perhaps to less water along the road here than along the east approach road. The absence of flies here seemed to explain the corresponding absence of sandpipers.

The stomach of a Cliff Swallow picked up on the road contained a mass of food which seemed to be identical with that in the sandpiper stomachs. It seems probable that the horned larks and blackbirds and phalaropes were also feeding on these flies, although evidence here is circumstantial. It would seem that the many blackbirds on the pavement on June 17 were almost certainly feeding on the flies. On the water where the phalaropes were feeding large numbers of these flies floated.

Although the two or three thousand sandpipers noted were practically all feeding on the pavement, the flies were more abundant in the grass and on the lumpy shore bordering the road. In one place on the shore the flies were so numerous that their wings made the ground appear glassy. Since food was abundant in all the habitats (pavement, grass, and lumpy shore) some other factor than presence of food seemed to be determining the habitat choice of the sandpipers.

In feeding, a sandpiper darted after the fly which it had started, seizing it where it lit a few feet away. The smooth pavement facilitated this sort of feeding activity, permitting the bird to run freely after the food and to keep it in sight. If the feeding ground were lumpy, running would be difficult and the bird might lose sight of the fly if it should light behind a lump. The habitat preference of the birds was definitely advantageous to its mode of feeding, suggesting that it was determined primarily by freedom of movement, and also by continuous visibility of prey.—ADOLPH MURIE, *Wildlife Division, National Park Service*, and H. D. BRUCE, *U. S. Forest Service, June 24, 1935*.

Magpie-jay Robs Nest of Derby Flycatcher.—Rarely have I observed any species of bird approach nesting sites of the larger tyrant flycatchers; and heretofore, the few that did venture near, were promptly driven off. While hunting near Puerto Humo, province of Guanacaste, Costa Rica, April 17, 1935, my attention was drawn to a large bird as it alighted on a large globular nest, set into top branches of a small acacia tree growing in a semi-wooded pasture. Approaching the site, the bird was recognized as a Magpie-jay (*Calocitta formosa pomposa*), and the nest as of the Derby Flycatcher (*Pitangus sulphuratus derbianus*). The jay was vigorously endeavoring to penetrate the interior of the nest, using both bill and claws. It may be remarked here that the genus *Pitangus* has the nest entrance on the side.

The quest of the jay was successful, for within three minutes it flew away with an egg speared on the bill. A pair of derbies sat during this period in nearby trees, uttering their "war-notes"; but only once did one of these probable owners launch an assault against the marauder, pecking the jay on the back of the head, which appeared to give the latter little discomfort.—AUSTIN SMITH, *Zarcero, Costa Rica, May 9, 1935*.

NOTES AND NEWS

The annual meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union will be held this year, October 21 to 24, at Toronto, Canada, under the auspices of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology. Mr. L. L. Snyder, of the staff of this Museum, is Secretary of the Committee on Arrangements, and from him information can be sought as to hotels, etc. The delightful autumn season, the intellectual profit from the programs, the social opportunities

afforded, the frank hospitality of the Canadian people, are all features attested to by previous occasions of the sort. We advise attendance especially by bird students who have not before attended a Canadian meeting of the A.O.U. All those who have, need no urging.—J. G.

FAMILIAR BIRDS OF THE PACIFIC SOUTHWEST is the title of a new bird guide, by Florence V. V. Dickey, recently published