

Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currucoides*). At Guidici Ranch, July 6.

Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*). Three nests located, July 6.

Brewer Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus minusculus*). About Blairsden and Portola meadows, in territory apart from red-wings.

Savannah Sparrow (*Passerculus sandwichensis nevadensis*). At meadow about old barn on Blairsden road from camp, on several occasions.

White-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*). Same locality as last, but only on June 30.

Lincoln Sparrow (*Passerella lincolni*). In full song.

The subspecific approximations are based largely on Grinnell, Dixon and Linsdale's "Vertebrate Natural History of Lassen Peak Region" (*op. cit.*). It is hoped that the area, a provocatively interesting one from the distributional standpoint, may receive a closer examination from a collecting ornithologist, for then the precise subspecific relationships can be established.

Berkeley, California, July 27, 1935.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Speed and Eyesight of a Pigeon Hawk.—In an experiment with a female Eastern Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius columbarius*) trained for falconry the bird came at once to the lure from measured distances up to 900 yards. The lure was a flat, padded bag, approximately 3 by 4 by 1.5 inches in size, with a pair of small-bird wings fastened to each flat surface. It was swung in a circle at the end of a 3 foot thong to call the bird; to human eyes at such distances it was perfectly invisible. The hawk was timed in both directions on a nearly windless day over a course of 1542 feet, and it averaged 29.9 miles per hour. It is well known that a trained bird makes no such effort or speed in coming to the lure as it shows in pursuit of live quarry. This hawk seemed, purely by guess, to go about 50 per cent faster in pursuing a live bird.

In comparing it with birds it was attempting to capture, it was observed that the Pigeon Hawk flew faster than quail (*Lophortyx californica*) or Meadowlarks (*Sturnella neglecta*), and more slowly, at least in a rising flight, than Horned Larks (*Otocoris alpestris*). It could catch a shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus gambeli*) in a long course free from cover; it was keener after shrikes than after any other bird. It could catch, bring down and kill a dove (*Streptopelia risoria*), or even a strong adult common pigeon if released within about 50 feet, but was easily outdistanced by these birds after they had attained top speed.

The hawk was often harassed by hummingbirds, sometimes six or seven at once. They flew circles around her. Sparrow Hawks (*Falco sparverius*) usually outmaneuvered the Pigeon Hawk, but few of them seemed to outspeed her. A wild, male Western Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius bendirei*) attacked her one day, kicked several feathers loose from her, and finally drove her to the ground. His speed was greatly superior to hers.—RICHARD M. BOND, *Oakland, California, December 3, 1935.*

The Brown Thrasher in Utah.—On December 6, 1935, while banding birds in Zion Canyon, at an elevation of 3,900 feet, I twice observed a bird that was thought to be a Sage Thrasher. The next day, December 7, this bird was trapped and banded (number 34-354902). After repeating three times the day following, making possible further study of its markings, the original identification was doubted.

On December 9, the bird again repeated and this time was collected for a specimen. It proved to be a female Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*) in rather worn plumage. So far as ascertainable, this is a new record for the state of Utah as well as an addition to the few records west of the Rockies. The specimen (number 114, in the Zion National Park Museum) was made up and identified by W. S. Long, Wild Life Technician, Zion National Park.—HENRY GRANTHAM, *Zion National Park, Utah, December 12, 1935.*

New Nesting Records for Yosemite Valley.—The chart of daily bird records over a period of thirteen years in Yosemite Valley discloses the fact that the Mountain Bluebirds (*Sialia currucoides*) are not to be expected during the summer months. However, birds of this species may be found in the Yosemite any time between the middle of October and the middle of

May, except during January, for which wintry month there is not a single record. Therefore, Mountain Bluebirds have been considered as transient in Yosemite Valley before and after the nesting season.

In other words, stray flocks of Mountain Bluebirds use the Valley as a loafing grounds on the way to and from their nesting grounds in the high mountain meadows. And strangely enough, while the Mountain Bluebirds come down-mountain to visit the valley, the Western Bluebirds (*Sialia mexicana*) come up the canyon to feast on the crop of mistletoe berries so that both species of bluebirds are found in the Valley at the same season. However, there is very little competition along the forage lanes, as the Mountain Bluebirds feed mostly over the meadows.

After the experience of this year, 1935, we are forced to modify our idea of the status of the Mountain Bluebird, for it is no longer to be considered as purely transient. Two pairs, and possibly three, nested in the grove of cottonwoods at the lower end of Leidig Meadow. The birds were first reported by Walter Fitzpatrick, who saw two pairs there on July 5. The following morning I went to the meadow to investigate and found two pairs of birds hunting over the meadow in true bluebird fashion. On hovering wings they would poise in the air and then dive into the grass. Soon it was discovered that all the birds were carrying food back to the cottonwoods that bordered the meadow. One pair was feeding young already out of the nest. We failed to locate the young of the second pair, as voracious mosquitoes rather discouraged a prolonged hunt. However, two days later we found a second pair feeding fluffy young—young that were apparently just out of the nest, as they were unable to fly more than a few feet at a time. Twice during our several visits with the bluebirds, six adult birds were seen, but only two families were we able to locate. The birds were last seen on July 11.

While we were searching about for the nest hole of the bluebirds we discovered a pair of Slender-billed Nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis aculeata*) carrying food into an old woodpecker hole. This nuthatch has been found nesting below the Valley in the digger pine country and also above the Valley in the Little Yosemite, but never before have we found a nest in Yosemite Valley.

The nesting on the floor of the Valley of Mountain Bluebirds and Slender-billed Nuthatches would seem to indicate that the heavy winter and the late cool spring had affected the movements individually of some species of birds. Other observations that tend to bear out this theory are now presented.

Olive-sided Flycatcher (*Nuttallornis mesoleucus*). These birds that seldom summer in Yosemite Valley are rather common this year.

Mountain Chickadee (*Penthestes gambeli*). In former years only a few pairs nested on the floor of the valley, this year they are rather common nesting birds.

Mountain Quail (*Oreortyx picta*). For the first time in fifteen years these birds were noted on the valley floor during the month of July.

Lincoln Sparrow (*Melospiza lincolni*). Two pairs nesting in the Valley instead of the usual one, or none.

Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*). Not a single bird noted on the floor of the valley this year while always before at least a dozen pairs nested here.

Evening Grosbeak (*Hesperiphona vespertina*). Rarely seen. No nesting pairs noted. Have not been so scarce in the Valley for a number of years.

Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx ruficollis*). The river was so high at nesting time that the usual nesting sites were unavailable.

Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*). More nesting pairs on the floor of the valley than at any time during the last fifteen years.

Audubon Warbler (*Dendroica auduboni*). Not common, but more numerous on the floor of the valley than they have been in recent years.

Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*). On July 15 these birds had not yet arrived in the Museum Garden.—CHARLES W. MICHAEL, *Yosemite, California, July 17, 1935.*

Broad-winged Hawk in Idaho.—So far as I am aware, there is no record for the occurrence of the Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*) west of the Rocky Mountains. There is now in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology a single specimen (no. 67600) collected May 23, 1935, at Castle Creek, 8 miles south of Oreana, Owyhee County, Idaho. This bird, in immature plumage, was killed by a rancher named Bachman, and presented to me.

Since this species of hawk is known to be migratory, its occurrence in this region, some four hundred miles west of its normal range, may be due to the tendency of yearling birds to wander—to explore new territories; or perhaps its mental complex was such that its sense of direction was functioning poorly. A small garter snake (*Thamnophis ordinoides*) was found in the stomach.—WILLIAM B. DAVIS, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, December 8, 1935.*