

based upon this specimen. The error was not incorporated in the A.O.U. Check-list (1931), but it is included in the late Dr. W. H. Bergtold's "Guide to Colorado Birds."—GORDON ALEXANDER, *University of Colorado, Boulder, Colorado, March 31, 1937.*

**Brown Pelicans Invade Arizona.**—The California Brown Pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis californicus*) has been known as an occasional straggler to Arizona on the basis of two published records. Law (Condor, vol. 26, 1924, p. 153) records one shot at Dos Cabezas, Cochise County, in the fall of 1914 or 1915. Bruner (Condor, vol. 28, 1926, p. 232) saw a flock of nine over Otero Canyon, Baboquivari Mountains, on March 23, 1925.

In June, 1935, Philip Welles, a student of the University of Arizona, flushed a Brown Pelican from a lagoon on the Arizona side of the Colorado River at Laguna Dam. It flew off down the river. In the summer of 1936, Brown Pelicans invaded Arizona in small numbers. In southern Arizona, on June 28, an immature Brown Pelican was found on the grounds of the Arizona School for the Deaf and Blind, at the western edge of Tucson. It was in starving condition and barely able to stand. Some fresh fish was at once procured, and the bird was fed all it would eat. Next morning it was transferred to the University of Arizona aviary and there was exhibited to the interested public for a time. During this period the bird was fed fresh fish twice daily and gained strength rapidly.

On July 14, fresh fish presenting too much of a problem in a desert city, this pelican was freed on Picacho Lake, an irrigation reservoir in the valley 60 miles northwest of Tucson, where White Pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) have been present for several years in numbers varying from six to one hundred (Condor, vol. 37, 1935, p. 243). Nothing further is known of this individual. At the very point on the shore of the lake chosen for its release, the remains of another immature Brown Pelican were found. This bird had been dead, apparently, for several days.

In northern Arizona, a flock of three Brown and four or five White Pelicans was seen by Mrs. Fred Metz at Mormon Lake, 30 miles south of Flagstaff, on June 7. She was informed that pelicans (doubtless the same flock, as there are no previous summer records of any pelican in the region) had been seen there June 6, also. About June 10, an immature Brown Pelican appeared on the Flagstaff city reservoir, 3 miles northwest of Flagstaff; possibly unable to rise, it remained there until caught by hand, June 15. It was turned over to the Museum of Northern Arizona, but was too weak to save and died the same afternoon. This specimen is now in the collection of the Museum of Northern Arizona.—CHAS. T. VORHIES, *University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona*, and ALLAN R. PHILLIPS, *Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff, Arizona, April 20, 1937.*

**Red-tailed Hawk Choked by Squirrel Skull.**—While collecting in the foothills near the old deserted town of Nortonville, Contra Costa County, California, I found a dead immature Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo borealis calurus*) that apparently had been killed by a mammal skull which had lodged in its throat. The skull was so tightly wedged in the throat that it could not be removed until the skin was cut away. Upon examination the skull proved to be that of the ground squirrel, *Citellus beecheyi*.



Fig. 52. Head of a Red-tailed Hawk killed by the skull of a Ground Squirrel.

When the loose matted hair was scraped from the skull it was found that the squirrel's skull had been in the hawk's stomach for some time and the flesh had been digested from it. The bones of the zygomatic arch had been broken at the middle of the arch and the sharply protruding jugal bones had caught in the sides of the throat.

Those who saw the dead hawk formulated several theories to account for its death. One possibility is that the bird had been shot and had attempted to expel the skull as it died. However, from the way the sharp broken jugal bones were stuck in the throat, it seems improbable that this was the case. Also, the hawk was found in the bottom of a small canyon some distance from any road, trail or habitation.

The most likely theory is that the hawk attempted to expel the skull, and the jugal bones caught in the throat. Of course, it is also possible that the squirrel had been poisoned and that the strychnine had contracted the throat muscles of the hawk, thus stopping the progress of the skull which would otherwise have been expelled with ease. If this were the case and the squirrel had been poisoned, the skull would surely not have remained in the hawk's stomach long enough to have the flesh digested from it, as the strychnine would have caused the hawk's death long before that.

The accompanying photograph (fig. 52) shows the squirrel's skull just as it was found in the hawk's throat and before it was cut out.—LAWRENCE W. SAYLOR, *Department of Entomology, University of California, Berkeley, April 15, 1937.*

**Two Unusual Screech Owls.**—Strange accidents occur occasionally to birds in flight, and the following incident concerns one of these. On the morning of January 3, 1937, while driving from Marina to Salinas in Monterey County, California, we found a dead California Screech Owl (*Otus asio bendirei*) hanging on a barbed wire fence near Camp Ord. One barb of the fence was hooked through the bird's trachea and one wing was broken, but otherwise the bird was in perfect condition. The freshness of the bird indicated the accident had occurred on the previous night. It is difficult to imagine how a bird with the reputed "night sight" of an owl could "miss" while attempting to fly between the top two wires of a four-wire fence, which were spaced eighteen inches apart.

It is well known that in the absence of normal roosting places, birds occasionally choose strange places to pass their time of rest, but a screech owl turned "billy owl" seems distinctly unusual. Wild Horse Canyon, east of San Lucas, Monterey County, is a region almost, if not entirely, devoid of hollow trees such as are utilized by small owls to rest within during the daytime. It was with some surprise that we found a Pasadena Screech Owl (*Otus asio quercinus*) in an old ground squirrel burrow in the side wall of a barranca in this canyon on the afternoon of January 10, 1937. The bird was secured alive by enlarging the hole and grasping it with a gloved hand.—JACK C. VON BLOEKER, JR., and R. L. RUDD, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, February 15, 1937.*

#### **Pacific Golden Plover and Curlew Sandpiper on the Pacific Coast of North America.**

—While there are many records of shorebird stragglers from the Old World on the Atlantic Coast of North America, those from the Pacific side are comparatively few. Of Old World species taken on the Atlantic side there are records of twelve, excluding all Greenland records; on the Pacific we have only six, excluding all Bering Sea records. This does not imply that there is less chance of an Old World migrant straggling to the Pacific Coast of America; actually there are probably far more of these waifs on the Pacific than on the Atlantic side. But the number of observers who are interested in shorebirds is infinitely less and there is not, nor ever has been, any shooting of shorebirds over decoys in the west. This practice on the Atlantic Coast was productive of many extraordinary records.

During July and August of 1936 a good deal of time was spent by the writer along the north shore of Graham Island, the most northerly of the Queen Charlotte group, British Columbia, in the hopes of recording some of these stragglers. Shorebirds were especially numerous, ten times as many as were seen on a previous sojourn in 1920. But the weather was all against the observer; continuous high winds made the flocks restless and exceedingly wary, so that they rose usually at 100 yards range. At such a distance small distinctions were difficult to make out, even with a good binocular, and shooting at hazard into the large flocks would only mean useless slaughter.

During part of the time the writer had the pleasure of the company of a fellow enthusiast, Mr. A. C. Mackie, but both of us were away on Langara Island for two weeks at the height of the migration. On that island the great numbers of Peale Falcons (*Falco peregrinus pealei*) [forty pairs nest there on 25 miles of shore line] made the study of shorebirds an impossibility.

**Pacific Golden Plover.** *Pluvialis dominica fulva*. From August 22 to 28, inclusive, small lots of Pacific Golden Plover were seen every day that we were on the beach near Masset; no American Golden Plover were seen then, nor at any time during our stay. All were adults, of which four were taken; three of these are now in my collection and one in Mr. Mackie's collection.

Through the courtesy of Mr. P. A. Taverner, of the National Museum of Canada, I have been able to examine the specimens that might be *fulva* in that collection; three of these are unquestionably *fulva*, the others only brightly colored *dominica*. The latter are frequently seen on the Pacific slope; in fact in all *dominica* from the west the color is consistently yellower than eastern specimens, but not in any way suggesting intergradation with *fulva*. The wing measurement and color of the lower surface, throat, breast and abdomen, can always be relied upon to separate the