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

two subspecies in juvenal and winter plumages. In summer adults, the wing length alone can be relied on.

There is obviously a considerable migration of *fulva* down the Pacific Coast in the fall, the adults preceding the young as is usual in the Limicolae. Whether this migration is deflected by the prevailing southeast trades to cause it to end up in the Hawaiian Islands is at present only problematical. But the assumption by Wells W. Cooke that all the plover that reach these islands from Alaska take the direct route from the tip of the Alaska Peninsula requires confirmation.

A complete list of Pacific Coast and interior records of *Pluvialis dominica fulva* as known to the writer is as follows:

Comox, Vancouver Island, November 2 and 4, 1903; 5 juveniles taken (not 3 as stated in "A Distributional List of the Birds of British Columbia"). Brooks.

Clayoquot, Vancouver Island, October 16, 1907. W. Spreadborough.

Comox, Vancouver Island, September 15, 1922. H. M. Laing.

Tofield, Alberta, September 9, 1925. C. J. Harrold. These three specimens are all juveniles, typical *fulva* in every respect. National Museum of Canada.

Masset, Queen Charlotte Islands, August 10, 1920, 1 adult. Brooks.

Masset, Queen Charlotte Islands, August 22 and 25, 1936, 4 adults. Brooks and Mackie.

Clallam Bay, Washington, October 28, 1921, 1 juvenile, Carl Lien (A. J. van Rossem, Condor, vol. 38, 1936, p. 217).

San Francisco Bay, California, January 15, 1922, 1 in winter plumage. D. D. McLean (Grinnell, Condor, vol. 38, 1936, p. 219). An examination of all Pacific-Coast-taken Golden Plover will probably show further specimens of *fulva;* a doubtful specimen in worn plumage is in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology in addition to the one recorded by Grinnell.

Curlew Sandpiper. *Erolia testacea.* On the beach some twelve miles east of Masset, Queen Charlotte Islands, I sighted a Curlew Sandpiper among a large crowd of adult Sanderlings and Western Sandpipers, in the evening of July 31, 1936. All were very restless, but by making a detour and allowing the flock to feed up to me, I was able to collect the stranger. The bird is a male in summer plumage with the first feathers of the winter dress coming in; a very fat bird. Measurements: Wing 124 mm., culmen 34, tarsus 30; now no. 8321 in my collection.—ALLAN BROOKS, *Okanagan Landing, British Columbia, Canada, April 26, 1937.*

A New Race of Brown Towhee, from the Kern Basin of California.—A series of 20 brown towhees in fresh fall plumage, obtained in 1933 from Walker Basin and vicinity, in Kern County, California, present differences from comparable material representing the race *Pipilo fuscus carolae* of the San Joaquin Valley to the northward. In 1935, there appeared the description of a new race of brown towhee from Inyo County, by A. J. van Rossem (Trans. San Diego Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 8, pp. 69–71). The range of this new race, *Pipilo fuscus eremophilus,* was stated as the "Argus Mountains of Inyo and San Bernardino Counties, southeastern California." Through the courtesy of Mr. van Rossem, we have been able to borrow from the San Diego Society of Natural History, 9 of the Argus Mountains birds he has collected. Comparison of these examples of *eremophilus* with our Walker Basin birds indicates that the specimens from the Kern River drainage basin possess at least one distinctive character, as well as a different combination of other characters. These disclosures justify, we think, the naming of the Kern Basin Brown Towhee as yet another race, which we designate as

Pipilo fuscus kernensis, new subspecies

Type.—Adult male, no. 63969, Mus. Vert. Zool.; 2 mi. N. Sorrell Ranch, 4500 feet altitude, Kelso Valley, Kern County, California; November 29, 1933; collected by R. M. Gilmore, original number 3304.

Subspecific characters.—Color of dorsum somewhat intermediate between that of *carolae* and *eremophilus,* being less brownish and more grayish than in *carolae* and less grayish, more brownish than in *eremophilus;* general tone, below as well as above, grayer than in *P. f. crissalis;* well marked patches of lighter gray on sides of hind neck, these patches tending to meet across dorsum in nape region so as to separate dark brown of crown and occiput from lighter brown of back [in the other races these two areas grade into each other fore-and-aft uninterruptedly]; in size characters, larger than *eremophilus,* especially as to bill, feet and claws, thus comparable with *carolae.*

Measurements.—Of type: Wing, 101.1 mm.; tail, 111.0; exposed culmen, 14.4; depth of bill at base, 9.0; tarsus, 27.4; middle toe without claw, 20.1; chord of hind claw, 11.4.

Range.—Drainage basin of Kern River, within extreme southeastern rim of San Joaquin Valley, in Kern County, California.

Remarks.—Many years ago, A. W. Anthony (Auk, vol. 12, 1895, p. 110) commented on the pallor of a specimen of brown towhee from the South Fork of the Kern River; he suggested that