

**Midwinter Records from the Vicinity of San Diego, California.**—For the past sixteen years the writer has participated, with other members of the San Diego Society of Natural History, in the annual Christmas Bird Census which is sponsored by the National Association of Audubon Societies. The route followed each year has been essentially the same. Many of the species recorded have been found in the same territory at each visit, if the character of the region has remained unchanged by man. For example, we have found one or two Vermilion Flycatchers (*Pyrocephalus rubinus flammeus*) at a certain pond near National City six times in the last seven years.

The 1937 census, which was taken on December 22, included two species heretofore not recorded as winter birds for the vicinity of San Diego. On that date the writer, in company of Clinton G. Abbott and Samuel G. Harter, watched a Western Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis hesperis*) for almost half an hour as it perched in the tules at the edge of a small pond on the north side of Sweetwater Valley near National City.

Frank F. Gander and James E. Crouch, who also participated in the census, confined their observations to the water front and recorded twenty-eight American Knots (*Calidris canutus rufus*). The large number of this species observed and the fact that the knot had not previously appeared in the San Diego census raised the question of correct identification. So the day following, December 23, the writer and Mr. Gander again visited the beach on the bay side of the strand south of Coronado. Three knots were found and one of them collected, thus establishing the bird's identity. Mr. Gander stated that in the course of the census, knots were seen in small groups of two or three birds, from the vicinity of Lindbergh Field south along the bay side of the Coronado Strand to the head of San Diego Bay. Examination of the few specimens of knots in the collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History revealed one unrecorded winter-taken bird, a female, collected at Pacific Beach, San Diego, California, on February 12, 1892, by Frank Stephens.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego Society of Natural History, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, January 5, 1938.*

**Laysan Albatross on San Nicolas Island, California.**—On April 5, 1909, C. B. Linton's Mexican camp cook, during his employer's temporary absence, captured an albatross on San Nicolas Island, which he cooked and ate. Mr. Linton succeeded in saving the head which remained in his possession until his collection was acquired by John E. Thayer. Linton identified the remains as those of the Short-tailed Albatross, *Diomedea albatrus*, and as such the specimen was first recorded by George Willett in Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 7 (1912, p. 17). The same bird again appeared in literature in 1917 when A. B. Howell (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 12, p. 30) quoted the record first published by Willett, while its third appearance was in 1933 when Willett again published the original instance of occurrence (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 21, p. 14) as the last known record of capture of *Diomedea albatrus* in California.

Apparently the basis of the record was originally identified by Linton and his determination was accepted without question by both of the authors involved; in fact neither Willett nor Howell mentioned having examined the specimen themselves.

Recently, while going over the Procellariiformes in the Thayer Collection, now in the Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, it was quite obvious that the specimen was not *Diomedea albatrus*, but more probably *D. immutabilis*, and as such I tentatively identified it. However, just to make sure, I sent the head to Dr. R. C. Murphy who concurs with me in its identification.

Thus it appears that when Linton's camp cook killed this bird he was not taking the last specimen of *D. albatrus* to be secured off the southern California coast, but the first specimen of the Laysan Albatross, *D. immutabilis*, from the Pacific coast north of Lower California.—JAMES L. PETERS, *Museum of Comparative Zoölogy, Cambridge, Massachusetts, December 8, 1937.*

**Screech Owls and Automobiles.**—These notes, taken over the period of one year of watchfulness, seem to indicate that the Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) suffers to a great degree from automobiles, at least in the Santa Cruz area of California.

Interest was awakened on December 14, 1936, when a Screech Owl was found on the Santa Cruz-Los Gatos highway near Holy City, and another was found February 22, 1937, on the Skyline Boulevard near Big Basin. On November 9, 1937, one was found on Corralitos road near Corralitos. November 12 and 13, 1937, two more were found near Pinto Lake, Watsonville, on the Green Valley and Amesti roads, respectively. Then, on January 24, 1938, one was picked up on the Casserly road near Watsonville.

During this period, and in over 10,000 miles of travel in this district, many other birds and mammals have been found in the road, but no other owls or other night-flying birds. However, a Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus*) was narrowly missed on the night of May 9, 1937, on the Hecker Pass road, between Watsonville and Gilroy, California.—ALBERT C. HAWBECKER, *Watsonville, California, January 31, 1938.*