

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Feeding Behavior of a Red Phalarope.—It was a lovely sunny day. At twelve noon there was a lone Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) feeding on Gibson Beach in the Point Lobos Reserve. Gibson Beach is a bend of white sand about one hundred yards long and is sheltered by bluffs. This day the sea was calm, with one line of breakers crashing close to the shore.

The lone phalarope was foraging at the high tide mark where there was a line of decaying kelp on which countless sand-fleas were feeding. Wherever the bird found good pickings it would lie flat on its belly and make rapid jabs until the supply was exhausted. The attitude and manner of the bird, the rapid jerking of the head from side to side and the quick jabs, were like those of a phalarope feeding on the surface of a pool. I believe, however, that this manner was not acquired from a habit of feeding on the surface of water, but rather was it a method of trapping its prey. I was so close at times as to see sand-fleas bouncing off from the phalarope's chest. Had the bird been standing, many of these sand-fleas would have escaped, for once out of reach they would disappear like magic into the sand.

With a strange waddling gait and a swaggering hind end the pigeon-toed phalarope would move from kelp heap to kelp heap. Up and down that hundred yards of beach it traveled. Sometimes it would retrace its steps, sometimes it would fly back and start over. On the wing the phalarope was a lovely thing. Pure white when directly overhead—the sky was very blue—and when it glided toward the beach a white bar could be seen along the outspread wing. When the phalarope approached an especially juicy bit of kelp a gush of sand-fleas would explode into the air. Then the bird would belly down and really go to work. When the sand-fleas ceased hopping the phalarope would reach down, grasp a bit of kelp in his mandibles, and give it a vigorous shake to stir up the last remaining sand-fleas.

After two hours and twenty-five minutes of continuous feeding the phalarope flew out to sea and lit on the water just beyond the first breaker. Bobbing like a cork it took a thorough bath and then apparently went to sleep. In eleven minutes it was back on the beach again. How it could hold any more food was a mystery to me, but its appetite was apparently unimpaired. However, in thirty minutes the appetite was satisfied; the phalarope, puffed out like a pouter pigeon, lay down in the sand, tucked its bill in the feathers of its back, and went sound asleep.—CHARLES W. MICHAEL, *Pasadena, California, November 15, 1937.*

New Bird Records for Brewster County, Texas.—During several periods in 1936 and 1937 the writer had opportunity to record birds in the Big Bend area of southern Brewster County, Texas. Among the birds collected or observed are nine species, or subspecies, not recorded in the recent publication by Josselyn Van Tyne and George Miksch Sutton, "The Birds of Brewster County, Texas" (Univ. Michigan, Mus. Zool., Miscellaneous Publ. No. 37, August 24, 1937). The specimens listed below were identified by Dr. Harry C. Oberholser, to whom I express appreciation. The writer is obligated also to Dr. Van Tyne who read the manuscript and offered critical comments. All specimens are in the National Park Service collection at Santa Fe, New Mexico, unless otherwise noted.

Lesser Loon. *Gavia immer elasson.* On October 17, 1937, Mr. A. G. Clark shot a loon of this species on a quiet pool in the Rio Grande near Solis Ranch, elevation 1900 feet. Mr. Clark partially skinned the bird and turned it over to me two days later. The skin is in the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.

Pied-billed Grebe. *Podilymbus podiceps podiceps.* A lone individual observed at close range in a small cattail pond on October 26, and again on October 28, 1937. This pond is located one mile southwest of Boquillas, and about one-fourth mile from the Rio Grande at an elevation of 1850 feet.

Cormorant. *Phalacrocorax.* One observed on a sand bar on the American side of the Rio Grande at 2100 feet elevation near Castolon, March 31, 1936. Considering its small size and the location this was probably the Mexican Cormorant, *P. olivaceus mexicanus*, but since the bird was not collected the species is questionable.

Gadwall. *Chaulelasmus streperus.* On October 24, 1937, a small duck was observed on the cattail pond described above. It obviously lacked vigor and gradually grew weaker, until October 27, when it was found on the bank unable to fly. Upon preparation, it proved to be a female gadwall that appeared to have been wounded internally. The skin is in the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.

Sora. *Porzana carolina.* One observed on October 26, 27, and 28, 1937, in the cattail pond described above. A rail was also heard calling several times during this period, usually late in the evening.

Eastern Phoebe. *Sayornis phoebe.* On the morning of October 16, 1937, one was observed in a dead willow at Glenn Spring. On October 17, James O. Stevenson called my attention to one near a cattle watering tank at Dugout, and later the same day a female was collected from the top of a bush