FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Hailstorm Fatal to California Condors.—Two California Condors (*Gymnogyps californianus*) were found dead in Peachtree Canyon, which is about 20 miles northwest of Santa Barbara in the Santa Cruz drainage area, on October 17, 1936, by forest rangers in search of a reported lightning fire. Hailstones as large as walnuts still lay two feet deep in the gullies. They came upon a dead adult Condor lying near the carcass of a horse and, about a quarter of a mile away, a dead immature Condor. Another adult, probably the mate of the first bird, flew off laboriously when the party approached.

The two dead birds were brought to the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History by the Forest Supervisor on October 22. Naturally, they were not in the best condition for mounting, but I managed to save the skins as well as the skeletal parts that were not used in preparing them. Measurements, photographs and notes were taken. Both birds were very fat, the adult female weighing 18¾ pounds and the immature male 22½ pounds. Each had a wing spread of 8 feet 2½ inches from tip to tip of the longest primaries. The head of the immature male was dusky and covered with down and made an interesting study skin (no. 3505, Santa Barbara Mus. Nat. Hist.). I mounted the adult for display in the office of the Forest Service in the Federal Building in Santa Barbara.

Upon examining the bodies, it was found that although the skins were unbroken, the bodies of both were badly bruised. The back and clavicles of each bird were fractured and there were blood clots under the skin and in the region of the heart. The crop and stomach of the adult were empty. A little material was in the crop of the immature bird and only a little hair from a previous feeding was in the stomach.

The circumstances surrounding the discovery of the birds and the condition of their bodies suggest that they had probably just begun to feed upon the the carcass of the horse when the hailstorm overtook them. In their attempt to reach cover, they were beaten down by the driving hailstones and killed when they struck the ground.

The condors involved in this tragedy were undoubtedly the ones which, since about 1927, I have known to nest in this region. There are estimated to be between 40 and 50 California Condors now in existence and they are distributed over a comparatively small area. Had the hailstorm covered this entire area, it is conceivable that the California Condor might have been practically exterminated. Drastic weather conditions may thus be a considerable factor in the extermination of depleted or localized species.—EGMONT Z. RETT, *Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, California, March 8 1938.*

Correct Names for the Red-backed Sandpiper and Northern Long-billed Curlew.—In the first edition of the A. O. U. Check-list (1886, p. 152) our Red-backed Sandpiper appeared as *Tringa alpina pacifica* Coues with a range of "North America in general, breeding far north. Eastern Asia." This was repeated in the second edition, but in the *Auk* (vol. 21, 1904, p. 412) the Committee on Nomenclature adopted *"Pelidna alpina sakhalina* (Vieillot)" as an "earlier name." Under this name our bird has appeared in subsequent editions with a type locality of "en Russie=Sakhalin Island, Okhotsk Sea," and a range including North America and Eastern Asia.

This had seemed remarkable to me on account of the great difference in size, especially the bill, between birds from North America and those from Europe. Somewhat recently I secured a series of twenty-one (10 males, 11 females) collected by Mr. J. T. Wright at Hainan, Kingsu, and Liu-chi, Chekiang, China, in late October and December, 1927. Comparison of a similar series of eleven males and twelve females from North Carolina, Connecticut, Texas, Alaska, Oregon and California, taken in the months of March, April, May, June, September, October and December, and picked at random from my series of 175 skins from different parts of North America, shows that both sexes have bills averaging four millimeters longer than those of the Asiatic birds. This necessarily reinstates *P. a. pacifica* (Coues).

		Exposed culmen	Wing
pacifica	male	37.4 (36.0-39.3) mm.	118.4 (115.0-123.0) mm.
	female	41.4 (38.2-44.0)	121.9 (118.0-126.5)
sakhalina	male	33.0 (30.7-34.8)	117.7 (113.5-124.0)
	female	37.6 (34.5-40.0)	119.3 (114.3-125.0)

It will be noticed there is no overlapping in the length of the bills in the males, and very little in the females.

Dr. Oberholser, who kindly looked up the original description of *sakhalina* in the Nouveau Dictionnaire for me, writes that Vieillot gave no measurements, but meant apparently the common form of eastern Asia.

Most of the Chinese birds are juveniles, but all are in full winter plumage; and of the American birds eight are young, and three of the September birds are still in juvenal dress. The bill of this species grows very rapidly and attains its full length before October as a rule. Of Alaskan birds a downy juvenile collected on July 3 (no. 43886, L. B. B.) has a bill 13.4 mm. in length, a half-grown bird also taken on July 3 (no. 38789) one of 22.5 mm., and a young male (no. 27297) in full juvenal dress, taken on August 4, one of 34.3 mm.

In Red-backed Sandpipers the adults undergo a complete molt in September, whereas immatures in changing from juvenal to first winter plumage retain the juvenal tertiaries until late in the fall or winter. As a result, an October bird with fresh tertiaries is an adult, while one with fresh tertiaries in January is a juvenile.

The correct name of the small race of the Long-billed Curlew, admitted to the A. O. U. Check-list in the last edition under the name *Numenius americanus occidentalis* Woodhouse, is *N. a. parvus*.

Fortunately, Dr. Woodhouse in describing the small curlew he collected near Albuquerque, New Mexico, on August 20, 1851, gave its dimensions, showing it to be a bird with a very long wing and short bill. He measured the bill as 4.2 inches (106.7 mm.) and the wing as 11.5 inches (292.1 mm.). Thus his bird had a bill close to the mimimum for males of the northern race, 4.15 (105.4 mm.), and a wing longer than maximum for females of that race, 10.81 (274.6 mm.), but of normal size for the southern race, 11.26 (286.0 mm.). It is evident that such a combination is possible only in an immature female of the southern race in which the bill had not reached its full growth. Therefore *occidentalis* becomes a synonym of *americanus*, and for the small northern bird must be replaced by *parvus*. Of this fact I was aware when I described the Canadian subspecies.—Louis B. Bishop, *Pasadena, California, July 27, 1938.*

A Summer Record of the White-winged Crossbill in Oregon.—On July 12, 1938, while collecting in the Wallowa Mountains of northeastern Oregon, I came upon three White-winged Crossbills (*Loxia leucoptera*) in the spruces and firs of a sub-alpine meadow on the east fork of the Lostine River. The exact location was 18 miles south and 4 miles east of the town of Lostine, Wallowa County. Two males were taken, both of which were in breeding condition, with testes 7 mm. in length. These birds were singing a continuous and melodic song, much as described by Swarth (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., vol. 24, 1922, p. 234), who found this species breeding in July and August on the Stikine River, British Columbia. The songs I heard apparently were not of maximum volume.

There are no previous summer records of White-winged Crossbills for the state of Oregon, and in Washington, birds that have been noted in summer in the Cascade Mountains (Dawson, The Birds of Washington, vol. 1, 1909, p. 75), were not known to have been breeding.

Griscom's recent paper (Proc. Bost. Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 41, 1937, pp. 77-210) on crossbills has emphasized the erratic ways of the Red Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*), especially with regard to nesting season and distribution. White-wings, he states (p. 201), are by temperament less vagrant, yet one may expect irregularity on the part of any crossbill. The present record affords another example of the southward invasion of the breeding range of *curvirostra* by *leucoptera*.—Alden H. Miller, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, August 1, 1938.*

A Northwest Race of the Cinnamon Hummingbird.—The Cinnamon Hummingbird (*Amazilia rutila*) has a large range which extends from southern Sinaloa on the west coast of Mexico south to Costa Rica. Throughout this area only one geographic variation has been recognized, namely, a very dark-colored race which occurs on the west coast of Chiapas, Guatemala, and western El Salvador, and which bears the name of *Amazilia rutila corallirostris* (Bourcier and Mulsant). Ridgway (Birds of North and Middle America, part 5, 1911, p. 417, footnote) has called attention to the pallor of specimens from northwestern Mexico and also to the fact that topotypes of *rutila* from Guerrero are really intermediate between the northwestern specimens and *corallirostris*. At the same time he combines all specimens from western Mexico in his comparative table of measurements. Why he did not name the pale northwestern population as a distinct race can only be conjectured, although the scarcity of northwestern material at his disposal may well have been the reason. In any case the extensive series of this hummingbird in the British Museum not only verifies Ridgway's comment, but emphasizes it, in that there are even greater differences between northwestern specimens and those from Guerrero than is shown in the series in the collections in the United States National Museum. There is, therefore, no reason why the pale extreme of northwestern Mexico should not be recognized by name. It may be known as

Amazilia rutila diluta, new subspecies

Type.—Adult male, no. 157163, Coll. U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey; Santiago, Nayarit, Mexico; June 21, 1897; collected by E. W. Nelson and E. A. Goldman.