

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

The California Thrasher as a Mimic.—The reading of Dr. Loye Miller's informative discussion (Condor, vol. 40, 1938, pp. 216-219) of the mimetic activities of the mockingbird inspires the comment that the California Thrasher (*Toxostoma redivivum*) seldom receives due credit for his abilities in that direction. Probably the personal observations of others lead to a different conclusion, but it has seemed to me that it is *Toxostoma* rather than *Mimus* that really deserves the title of "mockingbird." Supplementing Dr. Miller's statement that "Certain mimetic notes are heard only in the area or at the season when the imitated species is present," it may be said that the thrasher, at least, seems able to remember them for a considerable time. Upon hearing the familiar and unmistakable notes of the male Bullock Oriole here at Azusa in midwinter I have found their author to be a thrasher. Late one summer, a thrasher's song included the call of a robin, a species which is an irregular winter visitant here; this, however, might more easily have been an accidental resemblance.

The most impressive example of mimicry which I have heard from the thrasher was an excellent imitation of the wail of a coyote. So perfect was the inflection that, had not the plaintive howls fitted neatly into the bird's song, it would have been hard to believe that they did not emanate from a coyote in the distance. The thrasher did not, however, attempt to reproduce the series of barks which ordinarily precedes the wailing note.—ROBERT S. WOODS, *Azusa, California, October 3, 1938.*

A Rattlesnake Kills a California Quail.—While checking over reports from several wildlife refuges under the supervision of the United States Biological Survey, I became interested in some notes concerning an encounter between a rattlesnake and a California Quail (*Lophortyx californica*) contained in the report of C. G. Fairchild, assistant refuge manager at the Tule Lake Wildlife Refuge, Siskiyou County, California. Mr. Fairchild is a careful and conscientious observer, and I believe his observations should be put on record. The substance of his report is as follows:

On July 26, 1938, a young California Quail was seen to fly under a bush at the Biological Survey headquarters. An enrollee of Camp Tule Lake B. F. 3 was approaching the bush to get a better view when he heard the buzz of a rattlesnake. Upon investigation the quail was found lying in a paralyzed condition beside the rattler; it died within 15 minutes. The snake was 2½ feet long and had six rattles. An autopsy was made and fang marks, surrounded by characteristic discoloration, were noted on the lumbar region. The antagonistic muscles of the legs were unequally paralyzed, and the heart was found to have stopped in diastole. These conditions indicate that the poison had a rapid lethal effect; otherwise the bird would have escaped the snake after being struck, unless the fangs were held in the wound until the quail was too weak to struggle.

The California Quail (*Lophortyx californica*) is a common permanent resident in the Tule Lake region, and rattlesnakes frequent the same kind of cover in considerable numbers. Additional studies of the relationship between these two species in this arid region are much needed.—STANLEY G. JEWETT, *Portland, Oregon, September 28, 1938.*

New Bird Records for Nevada.—The influence of Lake Mead upon the bird life of southern Nevada has already become apparent. During the past few months the following bird species, heretofore unrecorded in Nevada, have been observed:

Anser albifrons albifrons. White-fronted Goose. A lone individual was observed on the lake near the site of St. Thomas on May 6, 1938. It was in the company of a large number of teal.

Larus philadelphia. Bonaparte Gull. This species of gull was common along the lake shore near the site of St. Thomas on May 7, 1938. The birds were scattered along the shore in the company of Forster Terns.

Sterna antillarum. Least Tern. Nine of these terns were observed near the site of St. Thomas on May 7, 1938. One month later, on June 6, a single individual was seen flying along the lake shore at Hemenway Wash, below Boulder City.

It is believed that the presence of Lake Mead will attract other species to southern Nevada that are not recorded from the State at the present time.—RUSSELL K. GRATER, *Boulder City, Nevada, September 15, 1938.*

The Form and Pigmentation of a Supernumerary Secondary of a Flicker.—While examining a Red-shafted Flicker (*Colaptes cafer collaris*) taken last spring, I found an extra secondary present in one wing. The bird (F. H. T. no. 459) was an adult female captured alive at Davis,