

to the writer's attention at the Deer Park Guard Station on the Boise National Forest, Idaho, during the past summer (1939).

At the edge of the horse pasture of the station a block of sulfurized salt is kept for the horses and the deer that come in at night. The grass for several feet around the block has been removed by their pawing, so that there is a clear view of the ground.

On the morning of August 12 I observed nine Red Crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra*) on this area and flushed them to a nearby lodgepole pine tree. They returned to the salt area almost as soon as I sat down about fifteen feet from it. The birds could then be seen feeding on some coarse salt scattered around the block, using the tongue in the same manner as described in detail by Aldrich. One male bird was seen to "lick off" salt from the block itself.

For several weeks after this, a flock of the same size, probably the same one, visited the block regularly. On several instances, birds were seen "fighting," by posturing, for the favorable feeding place under the block, which was several inches above the ground.

Other birds noted at the salt during the same period were the Western Mourning Dove, Cassin Purple Finch, Evening Grosbeak, and Pine Siskin. The dove, however, apparently used the place for dusting and resting during the middle of the day, whereas the other birds were seen in early morning or late evening and probably fed on the salt, as there was little if any vegetable material near the block.—WILLIAM H. MARSHALL, *Bureau of Biological Survey, Boise, Idaho, January 29, 1940.*

A European Widgeon in Solano County, California.—Mr. Paul S. Wetmore of Benicia, California, shot a European Widgeon (*Mareca penelope*) on the grounds of the St. Germain Gun Club on Grizzly Island, Solano County, California, on October 29, 1939. This appears to be the first recorded occurrence of this species in my county since 1884, when two were taken at Rio Vista (see Grinnell, *Pac. Coast Avif. No. 11, 1915, p. 33*). Mr. Wetmore, who is a veteran duck hunter, recognized the bird as an unusual species and he presented it to me for my collection of scientific skins. It is a male; weight 1 pound, 12 ounces; length 19½ inches and wing spread 31½ inches.—EMERSON A. STONER, *Benicia, California, December 16, 1939.*

Posturing of the Western Sandpiper.—Observations of the 1940 spring shore-bird migration in the San Francisco Bay area have led me to notice the general presence of an interesting habit of the Western Sandpiper (*Ereunetes mauri*). In large flocks of feeding sandpipers there is often some little "conflict" between individuals; one will meet another head on while food hunting or again will

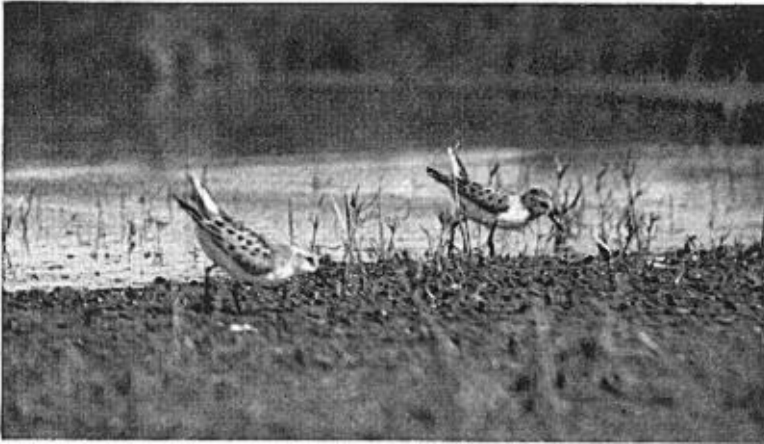


Fig. 61. Tail-elevating posture of Western Sandpiper.

chase its neighbors away from the area in which it is feeding. On such occasions the head may be lowered and the tail thrown up stiffly, the wings not being noticeably dropped. A rigid posture will be held for a moment (fig. 61) then the bird will relax, go on about its food hunting, and the tail will gradually descend to a normal position as shown in figure 62.