

The ibis were nesting in a colony with about one hundred and fifty Brewster Egrets (*Egretta thula brewsteri*) and possibly one hundred Black-crowned Night Herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax hoactli*); many nests of both the egrets and night herons were found, containing eggs, or small or large young. The only nests of the Brewster Egret in Colorado of which we know prior to this time were those recorded from Barr Lake (Bailey and Niedrach, Condor, 40, 1938:44-45).—ALFRED M. BAILEY and FRED G. BRANDENBURG, *Colorado Museum of Natural History, Denver, Colorado, August 14, 1940.*

A Note on the Food of the Western Burrowing Owl.—The literature on the food habits of the Western Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia hypugaea*) has been well summarized by Bent (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 170, pt. 2, 1938:389-390). On a recent trip to Colorado I made some observations which add to our knowledge of the diet of this owl.

Within the city limits of Denver, and close to the new army airport, is a sizable colony of prairie dogs. Within this colony at least two pairs of Burrowing Owls were utilizing the deserted burrows of the prairie dogs. On June 25, 26, 27, 1940, I visited this colony and collected several hatfuls of the pellets and refuse from the nesting sites of these owls. At that time the young owls, numbering 7 and 8 in the two broods, were well developed but could not yet fly. They would cluster about the mound at the entrance to the burrow, watching eagerly for the parents, both of which engaged in the feeding activities. About the mound lay quantities of crayfish, feathers, insect fragments and other detritus, and the mounds could be recognized at some distance by the white splashes of excrement.

Crayfish were the most conspicuous and bulky food items about the dens. The nearest source of this food was well over a mile distant, and it is probable that the owls flew considerably farther in order to secure such food. A list of the determined food items follows:

Crustaceans: Numerous fragments of *Cambarus* sp.

Insects: Spiny-legged camel cricket (Rhaphidophorinae), many fragments; *Calosoma*, numerous; *Pasimachus*, very numerous; *Harpalina*, very numerous; 7 other carabids, several scarabaeids, a few tenebrionids and weevils, several cydnids, 3 caterpillars and 2 hymenopterans.

Amphibian: Leg bone of *Rana*.

Birds: Numerous feathers of the Western Kingbird, *Tyrannus verticalis*.

Mammals: Several jaw bones and fur of *Microtus*; bones of *Cynomys*. The latter were probably not killed by the owls, but rather were individuals which had died in the burrows and had subsequently been removed by the birds.

I am indebted to Charles C. Sperry of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Denver, who made the majority of the determinations.—W. J. HAMILTON, JR., *Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, November 5, 1940.*

A New Race of Bush-tit from Southeastern California.—Previously it has been shown by van Rossem (Auk, 53, 1936:85-86) that the bush-tits from the southeastern corner of California were distinct from others in the Great Basin region. It was suggested by him that birds from the Providence Mountains of southern California and other ranges in the vicinity represented a north-westward extension of the range of the race *Psaltriparus minimus cecaumenorum* from central Sonora, Mexico. The similarity in the birds was supposedly in their coloration. Examination of the type series of *cecaumenorum*, kindly loaned to me for study by the Museum of Comparative Zoology through Mr. James L. Peters, shows that the birds are either juveniles or adults in very worn plumage, and that they are undoubtedly not representative of the true colors occurring in the population.

Upon comparison of a series of 44 adult birds taken in the Providence Mountains, the type series of *cecaumenorum*, and representative birds taken from the range of *P. m. plumbeus*, it was readily seen that we were dealing with three distinct races. Accordingly, there follows a description of a new race, *providentialis*.

Psaltriparus minimus providentialis, new subspecies.

Type.—Adult female no. 72812 Mus. Vert. Zool.; collected 5 miles NE Granite Well, 5400 feet, Providence Mountains, San Bernardino County, California, December 28, 1938, by J. T. Marshall, Jr.; orig. no. 231.

Subspecific characters.—Pileum concolor with dorsum, whole back being olivaceous; flanks without the conspicuous vinaceous seen in *plumbeus*, hence more uniformly buffy; throat and belly usually concolor, instead of throat lighter as in *plumbeus*; auriculars generally browner than in *plumbeus*; dimensions greater than in any other race.

Measurements of type.—Wing, 51.8 mm.; tail, 60.7; bill length from nostril, 6.3.

Range.—Providence Mountains of southeastern California and Charleston Mountains of southern Nevada; in less extreme form in White and Inyo mountains of California.

Remarks.—The differences in coloration between this new form and *plumbeus* have already been noted by van Rossem (*op. cit.*). To review these characters, *plumbeus* possesses an olivaceous back which contrasts with the ashy gray pileum, whereas in *providentialis* the dorsum and pileum are concolor. The vinaceous wash seen on the flanks of *plumbeus* is, in fresh-plumaged birds, not seen in *providentialis* to any great extent. Two characters not previously noted are the lighter throat in *plumbeus* and the darker auricular feathers in *providentialis*.

In comparison with *cecaumenorum*, *providentialis* is a larger bird in all measurable characters. The true coloration of *cecaumenorum* is subject to doubt, as no winter-taken individuals are available. The head and auriculars of the topotypes of *cecaumenorum*, even though worn, seem too light to be equivalent to *providentialis*.

The following are the average measurements (in millimeters) of the three races of bush-tits in question. Males and females are combined, as no significant differences in the averages of the sexes has been found.

	Number	Wing	Tail	Bill length from nostril
<i>plumbeus</i>	42	50.3 σ 1.01	56.5 σ 2.78	6.12 σ .24
<i>cecaumenorum</i>	9	48.9 σ 1.30	54.7 σ 1.32	5.90 σ .28
<i>providentialis</i>	44	51.3 σ 1.42	59.0 σ 2.28	6.43 σ .24

In a series of skins from Inyo and Mono counties, California, contained in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, coloration on the back is similar to *providentialis* and the flanks lack the vinaceous wash; but the throat is lighter than the belly and in this they are similar to *plumbeus*. The auriculars are intermediate between the two forms. On the whole, however, these birds are closer to the new form than they are to *plumbeus*. The birds from the Charleston Mountains are similar to those of the Providence Mountains (see van Rossem, *op. cit.*)—M. DALE ARVEY, *Boise Junior College, Boise, Idaho, November 29, 1940.*

Unusual Behavior of the Florida Gallinule.—At Lindo Lake, Lakeside, San Diego County, California, I was fortunate in observing some peculiar actions of the Florida Gallinule (*Gallinula chloropus*). On April 6, 1940, one was noticed paddling among the tules. It was frightened and hid in the thick growth, when I tried to show it to my companion. Soon after we moved away it showed itself on the other side of the narrow neck of water.

A Dr. Beale and his party from San Diego arrived and we searched the area for the bird, without locating it. When we returned to the car, the gallinule appeared on the shore and, as we watched, proceeded to climb a willow tree to a height of about twenty feet. The wings were used only slightly to assist in balancing as the bird walked up the sloping trunk. The gallinule stayed on the trunk or large branches. Another bird came out of the tules and followed the first up the tree. Both gallinules remained in the tree about five minutes, apparently feeding on the willow catkins. An effort was made to photograph them, but the tree was too dense. One bird flew down into the reeds, and the other was flushed by throwing a stick. Both hid again and were seen no more. No notes were heard during the entire episode.—JAMES G. PETERSON, *Descanso, California, November 1, 1940.*

The Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse in Lake County, Oregon.—Gabrielson and Jewett (*Birds of Oregon, 1940, pp. 216-217*) mention the Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Pedioecetes phasianellus columbianus*) as now being scarce and apparently in danger of early extinction in Oregon. Since Jewett does not record it from the Hart Mountain Antelope Refuge (U. S. D. A. Misc. Publ. no. 355, 1939) as late as 1939, the following note may be worthwhile.

While with a paleontological field party from the California Institute of Technology in 1940, the author spent several days at Beatty Butte, Lake County, Oregon. Here, on July 29, a band of four Sharp-tailed Grouse was flushed on the western side of the Butte, high up among dry lava rocks and grasses. The birds were seen in the evening, just before sunset. In flight they moved more rapidly and were noticeably smaller than Sage Hens, which were numerous in this region. Uttering sharp cries, they passed up and over the brow of a small hill, to rise again and disappear at our approach.—JOHN E. CUSHING, JR., *California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California, October 9, 1940.*

Creepers and Sequoias.—I was much interested by the Rankins' recent paper (*British Birds, 34, 1940:56-60*) on the roosting habits of the Tree Creeper (*Certhia familiaris britannica*) in sequoias introduced to Great Britain. Of 17 *Sequoia gigantea* and 12 *S. sempervirens* under observation, 12 and 4 held creeper roosting holes, totalling 139 and 6 in number, respectively. Kennedy (*British Birds, 30, 1936:2-13*) also discusses this matter and on page 2 advises that some of the trees were probably