

Notes on the Birds of Sitka and Vicinity, Southeastern Alaska.—The only complete report treating specifically of the birds of the Sitka region, Alaska (Baranof, Chichagof and Kruzof islands), is that by Willett (Condor, 16, 1914: 71-91). In this excellent paper 152 forms are listed and a full bibliography is given. In 1915 W. W. Brown collected in the Sitka region for two months or more, but the results of his work have been but scantily reported on. In 1920 A. M. Bailey visited the region for three weeks, in the course of which he added nine forms (Auk, 44, 1927: 1-23, 184-205, 351-367) to Willett's list.

Since 1928 the writer has been a resident of Sitka. He has been interested in birds throughout this period, although effective ornithological work was done only in 1940, from February to September. The following notes are offered as a supplement to Willett's and Bailey's lists, which omitted most of these forms, or failed to give complete data, largely because the observers were not in the region throughout the year.

Colymbus auritus. Horned Grebe. Common migrant; winters in small numbers. In 1940 seen many times from February 29 to May 1, and on September 4.

Branta canadensis minima. Cackling Goose. Flocks were seen by Bailey in May and October. The only bird seen by the writer was secured; it was a male, from Port Krestof, Kruzof Island, taken April 30, 1940.

Branta nigricans. Black Brant. In April, 1933, a large flock was seen near Port Krestof, Kruzof Island. In 1940 the species was noted several times: two birds were noted in Olga Strait on February 28; two on the Indian River flats on April 18; a flock of twenty in Port Krestof from April 30 to May 2; a flock of twenty near Fred's Creek, Kruzof Island, on May 4.

Chen hyperborea hyperborea. Lesser Snow Goose. Regular migrant. A flock of eight was flushed from the Indian River flats the morning of May 10, 1940; flocks passed over Sitka, flying east, on May 29, May 30, and May 31, 1940.

Mareca americana. Baldpate. Common spring migrant; rare in the fall. In 1940 it was seen several times from April 16 to May 1, and on August 4.

Glaucionetta islandica. Barrow Golden-eye. Winters in large numbers, but is usually less plentiful than the American Golden-eye. Seen as late as May 17 in 1940.

Buteo lagopus s. johannis. American Rough-legged Hawk. Taken at Sitka by Bischoff (Dall and Bannister, Trans. Chicago Acad. Sci., 1, 1869: 351-367). Noted in 1940 as follows: two on Mt. Verstovia on April 8; one over Sitka Bay on May 7; one over Sitka on June 2; one over Baranof Point on July 26.

Phasianus colchicus. Ring-necked Pheasant. A considerable number of birds was introduced near Sitka in 1933 and 1934. At present a few pheasants are left in the swamps on the outskirts of the town. A brood of immatures was flushed on July 10, 1940.

Oxyechus vociferus. Killdeer. One seen at close range on the Sheldon Jackson School campus, August 15, 1937; one on the Indian River flats, April 11, 1940; and two on the Indian River flats on August 29 and 30, 1940.

Calidris canutus rufus. American Knot. A specimen was taken at Sitka by Bischoff (Dall and Bannister, *loc. cit.*). A flock of eight birds was seen by the writer at Port Krestof on April 30, 1940.

Arquatella ptilocnemis ptilocnemis. Pribilof Sandpiper. The only previous record from southeastern Alaska consists of specimens from Lynn Canal reported by Hartlaub (Jour. für Orn., 31, 1883: 257-286). Three specimens referable to this race were taken by the writer in 1940 as follows: a male on April 1 (Fuertes Memorial Coll., at Cornell University, no. 7361); a female on April 17 (no. 9210); a male on May 7 (no. 7701).

Arquatella ptilocnemis couesi. Aleutian Sandpiper. Common in winter and spring. Specimens were taken in March, April and May.

The species *Arquatella ptilocnemis* was common in 1940 until May 10; on July 25 a single bird in breeding plumage was seen in a mixed flock of shore birds on a rock near Povorotni Point, Baranof Island.

Pelidna alpina sakhalina. Red-backed Sandpiper. Common migrant; occasionally winters. Specimens were taken at Sitka by Bischoff (Dall and Bannister, *loc. cit.*). In 1940 the species was common from April 26 to May 16 and was also noted March 6 (three birds at Sitka) and July 24.

Ereunetes mauri. Western Sandpiper. Abundant migrant; evidently winters occasionally. In 1940 the large flocks arrived on April 25, but three were observed previously, on March 8. They were watched for half an hour through a powerful telescope at a range of twenty-five yards or less, feeding in a mixed flock of shore birds at Sitka.

Larus argentatus thayeri. Thayer Gull. Common wintering bird, as noted by Willett (Condor, 25, 1923:26) at Craig and Wrangel. A female taken by the writer on March 28, 1940 (no. 7353), has the short slaty wing tipplings and the dimensions that characterize this subspecies.

Zenaidura macroura. Mourning Dove. A male Mourning Dove taken by Merrill on September 14, 1912, was recorded by Willett as *Z. m. marginella*. The species has been seen at Sitka by the writer only once—a single bird that loitered about the Sheldon Jackson School campus for several hours on September 9, 1940.

Nucifraga columbiana. Clark Nutcracker. A single specimen was taken by Bischoff at Sitka (Dall and Bannister). One was seen about the houses of Sitka for several days in March, 1933. In April of the same year a lone individual was noted three miles south of town.

Nannus hiemalis pacificus. Western Winter Wren. Common resident. Noted daily from February 26 to September 7 in 1940; a specimen was taken on July 25; it was a juvenile about ready to leave the nest.

Acanthis linaria linaria. Common Redpoll. Several specimens were taken by Bischoff. A single redpoll was found dying on a road near Sitka in January, 1930.

Passerella iliaca unalaschkensis. Shumagin Fox Sparrow. Large gray fox sparrows were noted at sea level near Sitka on September 6 and 7, 1940. One was secured and proved to be a female of this race (no. 9211).—J. DAN WEBSTER, *Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, January 14, 1941*.

American Egret, Treganza Heron, and Ring-billed Gull at Malheur Lake in Winter.—

On December 21, 1939, in the vicinity of Malheur Lake, Oregon, fourteen American Egrets (*Casmerodius albus egretta*), eight Treganza Herons (*Ardea herodias treganzai*) and one Ring-billed Gull (*Larus delawarensis*) were recorded along with other waterfowl. A number of the egrets were seen with large flocks of Whistling Swans feeding in the shallow waters near the southeastern shore of Malheur Lake. The egrets and herons appeared to be having a hard time keeping warm and did little flying or wading. Many of the herons were standing humped up on top of muskrat houses. The maximum temperature during the day was 40° F.; prior to December 21 the lowest maximum daily temperature recorded in the fall was 36° F. The minimum temperature prior to that date was 10° F. In general the weather had been mild. On the night of December 22 it became colder, and until December 26 the maximum daily temperatures remained freezing or below and the minimum temperature was 4° F. On December 27, in the course of a trip around the lake, no egrets were seen, and only one Treganza Heron was noted with the other waterfowl.

Several herons were observed on a number of occasions in the Blitzen Valley, which is part of the Malheur Refuge, in each of the succeeding winter months. The birds evidently wintered there fairly successfully.

The above records are interesting inasmuch as the latest date recorded for the American Egret in Oregon by Gabrielson and Jewett (*Birds of Oregon, 1940: 107*) is November 19. They list the Treganza Heron as wintering regularly in Deschutes, Malheur, Klamath, Wasco, and Umatilla counties, and they give casual winter records for Crook, Grant, Union, Baker, Morrow, and Morrow counties. It may be that the Treganza Herons have wintered in the Blitzen Valley in the preceding mild winters. The Ring-billed Gull was probably a stray, as the gulls normally leave Malheur Lake much earlier in the season.—CLARENCE A. SOOTER, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Burns, Oregon, December 26, 1940*.

Elderberries as Food for Birds.—In June of 1940, I was camped on Rattlesnake Island in Clear Lake, Lake County, California. While there, I saw many birds feeding on elderberries. These included Red-shafted Flickers (*Colaptes c. collaris*), Downy Woodpeckers (*Dryobates p. turati*), Nuttall Woodpeckers (*Dryobates nuttallii*), Western Kingbirds (*Tyrannus verticalis*), Ash-throated Flycatchers (*Myiarchus c. cinerascens*), California Jays (*Aphelocoma c. immanis*), Plain Titmice (*Baeolophus i. inornatus*), Yellow Warblers (*Dendroica a. brewsteri*), Long-tailed Chats (*Icteria v. longicauda*), Bullock Orioles (*Icterus bullockii*), Black-headed Grosbeaks (*Hedymeles m. maculatus*), and Spotted Towhees (*Pipilo maculatus*, subsp.?). Of this group, the California Jay most frequently visited the elderberries. The next most frequent visitors were the Bullock Orioles and the Spotted Towhees, in that order. The other birds named were seen to eat the berries only once or twice.

Of the birds living on the island, the Song Sparrows and Yellow-throats were much more numerous than any of the other birds. Spotted Towhees and California Jays came next. The Bullock Oriole, although apparently not residents, flew to the island from the mainland about one-quarter to one-half mile away, and were seen eating the elderberries more often than the resident towhees. The orioles were not seen eating the berries as often as the jays, but there were more of them at one time and their total consumption was probably greater.

The only birds identified as juveniles which fed on the elderberries were orioles and jays.—NED W. STONE, *Berkeley, California, November 10, 1940*.