

As the leaves of the balm of Gilead are the first choice of this colony of martins and as these leaves have a balmy, or aromatic odor, support is given to the idea suggested above concerning their use as insect repellents. Most Purple Martin nests that I have seen are made of rather coarse materials, such as stems and straws, and even medium-sized potato stalks; mud is used by some, and it may be that leaves serve also as an insulating lining.—OSCAR MCKINLEY BRYENS, *McMillan, Luce County, Michigan, December 22, 1941.*

**Late Breeding Record for the Cassin Kingbird.**—A pair of Cassin Kingbirds (*Tyrannus vociferans*) built a nest high up in a eucalyptus tree growing in a yard at Corona del Mar, Orange County, California. They were observed feeding young in the nest on the very late date of August 18, 1941.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, September 7, 1941.*

**Soaring Snow Geese.**—Flocks of Snow Geese usually move through the sky as if intent on keeping an appointment. The black and white of the wings enhance the impression of rapidity of the wing beats, and the incessant high-pitched honks add to the seeming purposefulness of the flights. On October 30, the writer was observing the feeding habits of Canada Geese on the Salicornia mud flats west of Brigham, Utah, when he witnessed a marked deviation from the normal flight habits of Snow Geese (*Chen hyperborea*). A flock of 123 of the birds came *soaring* slowly in from the north, some 500 feet overhead, taking advantage of the air currents. They looked much like a flight of White Pelicans, a species which the writer has observed on countless occasions on their breeding and feeding grounds in Utah, Oregon, and other western states. The small sizes of the body and bill and the forward position of the neck were, however, apparent through field glasses and precluded the possibility of the birds being pelicans. The birds made no effort either to gain or lose altitude, except for an occasional wing beat serving to keep the flock intact. They were unquestionably loitering and evidently were enjoying the activity. And to make the incident even more unusual, not a sound was given off by any of the birds. The flight was watched through field glasses periodically for forty minutes and during that time the ground distance covered by the flock is estimated to have been between 1 and 1½ miles.—C. S. WILLIAMS, *U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Brigham, Utah, December 5, 1941.*

**Painted Redstart at Altadena, California.**—On January 14, 1942, a Painted Redstart (*Setophaga picta*) several times came to my bird bath in Altadena, California, where I watched it from a window at a distance of fifteen feet. It came once the next day.

On January 19 it returned, and since a pull trap had been set over the bird bath, I was able to catch and band it. Because I had the bird in my hand and compared it with the colored plate in Mrs. Bailey's "Birds of New Mexico," I feel that there can be no mistake as to the identity. There is only one previous record of this bird mentioned in Willett's list of the birds of southwestern California (*Pac. Coast Avif. No. 21, 1933:150*).—WALTER I. ALLEN, *Altadena, California, January 23, 1942.*

**Insect Food of the Sage Thrasher.**—The Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) is a highly desirable resident of wheat- and alfalfa-field fence rows, as well as of sagebrush, greasewood and shadscale range land, because of its beneficial, insectivorous food habits. This report on the food of this thrasher is based on an examination of 70 stomachs from birds collected throughout Utah in the years 1932 to 1941, inclusive. The abundance of grasshoppers present during outbreaks in these years apparently has been reflected in the large number of these present in the stomachs.

Recognizable insect food in the stomachs of eight specimens collected from March to the end of June consisted of the following: 10 grasshopper nymphs in five stomachs; 14 Hemiptera, including 1 predacious *Reduvius personatus*, 1 *Zelus socius*, 1 alfalfa bug (*Lygus elisus*), 1 each of the stink-bugs *Chlorochroa sayi* and *Carpocoris remotus*, and 1 *Nysius californicus*; Homoptera consisted of 2 leafhoppers and 1 sage aphid, *Macrosiphum coweni*; 42 beetles, including 2 scarabaeids, 3 click beetles, 1 buprestid, 7 darkling beetles, 1 clover leaf weevil and 1 alfalfa weevil; 2 cutworms, 1 being an army cutworm; 11 dipterous specimens, including 2 blowflies, 1 robberfly and 1 soldierfly; 174 Hymenoptera, of which 165 were ants. Many of the ants are common range and field pests, the harvester ant in particular preventing plant growth over sizable areas around its hills.

Recognizable contents of the stomachs of 62 thrashers of all ages, collected from July through October, consisted of the following: 138 orthopterous specimens, including 105 adult and 23 nymphal grasshoppers (mostly common injurious species), 5 field crickets, 1 snowy tree cricket, 1 coulee cricket, 2 cricket eggs, and 1 Jerusalem cricket; 5 termites; 1 thrips; 142 Hemiptera, including 4 pentatomids (*Euschistus inflatus*, *Thyanta custator* and *Chlorochroa sayi*), 109 adult and 7 nymphal false chinch