

sional observations of hunting falcons there. Mr. Charles Miller assisted in some of the identifications of the material listed above.

Another Prairie Falcon nest about 20 miles north of Yerington, Nevada, was visited on June 10, 1941. There were two young birds in the nest and two that had just left it. Thirty-eight pellets were picked up in and under the nest and all contained hair of *Citellus mollis* and nothing else. In addition there were partly eaten remains of seven of these squirrels in fairly fresh condition in the nest. The squirrels were very fat, and most of them had been skinned back from the head, as reported in an earlier note (Bond, Condor, 38, 1936:75). No remains of birds were found at this nest, although several species were abundant in the neighborhood.—R. M. BOND, *Piedmont, California, February 11, 1942.*

**February Records for the Black-headed Grosbeak.**—Here in the San Francisco Bay region the Black-headed Grosbeak (*Hedymeles melanocephalus*) is a common summer resident, arriving about the middle of April and leaving in late September. The earliest date of arrival which I have found reported is April 4, as given by Mrs. A. S. Allen (Condor, 35, 1933:226). The latest date of departure which she gives is October 7.

On the morning of February 19, 1942, while driving on College Avenue near the Oakland-Berkeley line, I saw a Black-headed Grosbeak lying in the street between the car tracks. Before my son could retrieve it, the bird was somewhat damaged by a passing truck, but even so made a good study skin, and is now no. 84639 in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology. The bird could not be sexed because of injuries, but is in male plumage, which is in excellent condition, making it improbable that it was an escaped cage bird. An abraded area on the head makes it seem possible that the bird had been stunned by striking an overhead wire before falling to the street.

Mention of this specimen elicited from Dr. Richard M. Eakin the information that at about sunset on February 16, or 17, while crossing the campus of the University of California between the President's House and Haviland Hall, he had heard the song of a Black-headed Grosbeak, but did not see the bird. Miss Susan Chattin adds that on February 24 she had an excellent view of a Black-headed Grosbeak on the lower campus, near the Center Street entrance.—HILDA W. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, March 9, 1942.*

**Social Behavior of the Oregon Junco.**—In the course of two winters, observations have been made which seem to indicate that the foraging behavior of flocks of the Oregon Junco (*Junco oreganus*) shows a distinct pattern. Deep snow was a common condition at my station at 5000 feet elevation on Cuyamaca Peak, San Diego County. Corn meal was spread on the snow, with one or two central heaps. As an individual junco came to feed, the tail would be spread each time a morsel of food was picked up. Succeeding birds would not alight on the feeding area at random, but would perch on a shrub or some other elevated point in order to view the flock. Careful appraisal would soon reveal that at one or two points the feeding birds were flashing their tail marks very rapidly. Invariably it was to one of these points that the new and hungry bird would fly, and in alighting force the feeding bird to vacate the spot where cornmeal was piled. The failure of the feeding bird to obtain food was a sign for the flock to break up. By the first of April the birds would flutter their wings, trill, fly at one another and rise a foot into the air in combat. Necessity of sharing the food passed quickly and the birds lost their flock unity with the coming of spring.—JAMES G. PETERSON, *Diablo, California, January 2, 1942.*

**Birds Affected by Botulism at Soda Lake, Nevada.**—What was judged to be an epidemic of botulism was observed from July 26, 1941, to August 19, 1941, among the birds inhabiting the vicinity of Soda Lake, Churchill County, Nevada. Individual birds showed various symptoms, some of which were limberness of the neck, greenish diarrhea, drooping of the wings, and muscular weakness. Torticollis, or twisting of the neck, was noted among many Avocets. Some birds seen along the shore entered the water and made slow progress by flapping along on the surface.

On numerous occasions birds were observed apparently feeding on what was thought to be the dead bodies, or dead larvae, of many soda flies (*Ephydra hians*). These flies were piled from one-half to one inch high in many places around the water's edge at the southwest tip of the lake, and it was at this point where dead birds were found. Regrettably, these insects were not submitted to an entomologist for identification.

Accompanied by Mr. Vernon L. Mills, a visit was made to the lake on July 26, 1941. We saw one Black-necked Stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*) in an advanced stage of sickness. Other birds found

that appeared to have died within the past few days were as follows: Avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*), 16; Killdeer (*Oxyechus vociferus*), 2; Ruddy Turnstone (*Arenaria interpres*), 1; Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus*), 1; Western Sandpiper (*Ereunetes mauri*), 1; Mallard Duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), 1; Wilson Phalarope (*Steganopus tricolor*), 2; Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*), 1. The Ruddy Turnstone and the Snowy Plover were saved as specimens (Mus. Vert. Zool. nos. 83266 and 83265, respectively). The turnstone is a new record for the state and the plover is also a noteworthy record.

On July 27, 1941, we again visited the area and found the following dead birds: Avocet, 1; Solitary Sandpiper (*Tringa solitaria*), 1. One Killdeer was found that was unable to fly.

On July 29, 1941, dead birds were found as follows: Avocet, 3; Killdeer, 1. One Western Sandpiper was found in a dying condition.

On August 7, 1941, we found more dead birds than at any other time. They were: Avocet, 30; Black-necked Stilt, 15; Western Sandpiper, 8; California Gull (*Larus californicus*), 2; Bonaparte Gull (*Larus philadelphia*), 1; Pintail Duck (*Dasyla acuta*), 2; Mallard Duck, 1; Killdeer, 7; Black Tern (*Chlidonias nigra*), 1.

On August 11, 1941, dead birds found were as follows: Shoveller (*Spatula clypeata*), 1; Gadwall (*Chaulelasmus streperus*), 1; American Coot (*Fulica americana*), 2; Avocet, 2; Black-necked Stilt, 2.

On August 19, 1941, all birds in the area appeared to be in a more healthy condition. One Green-winged Teal (*Nettion carolinense*) and one Cinnamon Teal (*Querquedula cyanoptera*) were found that appeared to have died recently.

On August 22, 1941, no dead or sick birds were seen. One large coyote was seen in the vicinity and numerous coyote tracks along the water's edge indicated that possibly these animals were feeding on the affected birds. Visits to the area on September 4, 16, and 22 revealed no evidence of dead birds.

—J. R. ALCORN, Fallon, Nevada, February 7, 1942.