

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Nests in the Cottonwoods at Gustine, California.**—Just south of the town of Gustine, Merced County, California, on Highway 33, there is a road that leads into a farm where a colony of American Egrets (*Casmerodius albus*) are breeding in the tops of some cottonwood trees along a stream. It is a place known to many people interested in birds and I have heard various estimates made of the size of the colony. Looking back in my own notes to May, 1939, I read, "There must be more than one hundred birds in the colony." I have heard others suggest two hundred as a probable figure.

This year (1942), on May 30 and 31, Mr. Frank Scott, Mrs. Dorothy Sheldon and I visited the place and Mr. Scott and I made a count of the nests while Mrs. Sheldon was taking moving pictures of the birds. The count was made from the ground with the aid of glasses. I feel sure there was no duplication in the count, but I am not sure that I have not missed some, for in one or two places the leafage made it difficult to see clearly. There are nine trees in line that are being used by the egrets, although when we first saw the colony from the barnyard it looked as though only five or six trees were occupied. There is a constant movement of the birds about the trees, and a constant chatter, almost like domestic fowl, that can be heard from across the field. A Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo borealis*) was sailing overhead and on the second day when the count was made we found the Red-tail's nest, with two young peering down at us, in the same tree with fourteen American Egret nests.

The heads of the young hawks were still downy but the wings of the one we could best see, because he stood erect, were well feathered out. The hawk's nest was on larger branches than were the nests of the egrets but at about the same level and close to two or three of them. On May 31 we stayed at the site from about 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. It was just as we were leaving that the adult hawk, which had been sailing in the sky, came down to the nest.

There were two or possibly four Great Blue Herons (*Ardea herodias*) to be seen about the trees and one was sitting on her nest, clearly visible. Another Great Blue's nest was, I think, in the next tree but the leaves were dense at that place and I could not be sure.

There were two pairs of Lewis Woodpeckers (*Asyndesmus lewis*) in this same group of cottonwoods and we watched one pair busily carrying food into its nest hole in a broken branch. Both pairs of Lewis Woodpeckers were doing a good deal of fly catching. They turn in the air with nearly as much skill as the Western Kingbirds that were also about these same trees. The pair of woodpeckers that I watched most closely did almost an equal amount of flycatching and taking of insects from the end of the same dead branch where their nest hole was situated.

The following count was made: Tree 1, 17 American Egret nests and 1 nest that may have been that of a Western Kingbird. Tree 2, 47 egret nests. Tree 3, 7 egret nests; this tree was nearly dead. Tree 4, 14 egret nests; Red-tailed Hawk nest with young; 1 nest that was probably that of a kingbird. Tree 5, 9 egret nests; 2 holes with Lewis Woodpeckers near them, calling. Tree 6, 31 egret nests; 1 Great Blue Heron nest. Tree 7, 24 egret nests; possibly a Great Blue's nest also. Tree 8, 47 egret nests; 1 hole with Lewis Woodpecker going in and out. Tree 9, 2 egret nests; this is a young tree.

The total of American Egret nests was 198. I have not counted the slight accumulations of sticks that seem to have been abandoned before they were finished. Once we saw an egret bringing sticks. Most of the nests seemed to be occupied. Sometimes young birds could be distinguished through the thin platform of sticks. There were many broken egg shells on the ground below. I still do not know whether each nest represents a family or not but I think they are all this year's nests.  
—HOPE M. GLADDING, Berkeley, California, June 15, 1942.

**Franklin Gull in Idaho.**—That the Franklin Gull (*Larus pipixcan*) should occur at least occasionally within the boundaries of Idaho is a logical certainty, but, so far as is now known, no records for that state have as yet been published. Recent inquiries have disclosed unpublished records, one of which is based on specimens, that will serve to establish this species as a member of the avifauna of Idaho. I am indebted to William H. Marshall of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Victor E. Jones of the University of Idaho, Southern Branch, and Lyle M. Stanford of the University of Washington for their several kindnesses in this connection.

Summaries of the various records, arranged chronologically, are as follows: (1) Two birds were seen at Minidoka Dam on July 28, 1910, by Stanley G. Jewett. Attention was drawn to this record, which is on file with the Fish and Wildlife Service, by Marshall.

(2) Two birds were collected in April, 1937, by Buck Cherry approximately four miles west of Meridian, Ada County, near U. S. Highway 30. Mr. Cherry (letter of March 24, 1942) states that