

found. The head and a wing were saved for record purposes and are now in the collection at the University of Utah. On the following day, May 9, 1942, at the Bear River Refuge yet another Herring Gull was seen by the writer in flight and later at rest on a dike with several California Gulls. Both the Herring Gull and its companions were in an immature plumage stage, being darkly mottled rather than immaculate.

These records indicate that the American Herring Gull is more common than generally supposed in Utah, probably being a regular transient in small numbers through the state in both spring and fall. Dr. Nelson's record of so many years ago seems to have been substantiated.

For several years in the spring while enroute to the colonial bird-nesting sites of Great Salt Lake, I have encountered small flocks of Sanderlings (*Crocethia alba*) on the lake. They have usually contained from 30 to 50 individuals. Flying in unison and exhibiting the "flock mind," their wheeling flight maneuvers with flashing white underparts have made impressive sights. On May 18, 1932, at Egg Island, I shot two birds from a flock but retrieved only one because a California Gull (*Larus californicus*) flew off with one Sanderling as soon as it fell in the water. The specimen which I did secure was in the tawny breeding plumage. On May 26, 1932, while visiting Rock Island, Utah Lake, a small flock of Sanderlings was encountered and four specimens were secured. Two were males and two were females, all in breeding plumage. Although Sanderlings were seen near Egg Island on May 7, 1938, no specimens were taken, but on April 21, 1940, one male and two females were secured there. These last specimens were taken about a month earlier than those of 1932 and show the whitish winter plumage rather than the tawny summer plumage. Previous records for Utah are those of Cottam (Proc. Utah Acad. Sci., Arts and Letters, 6, 1929:11) and Hayward (*ibid.*, 13, 1936:192), both of which are for Utah Lake, and Twomey (Ann. Carnegie Mus., 28, 1942:394) for the Uinta Basin.

The only certain records for Utah of the Lark Bunting (*Calamospiza melanocorys*) reported to date in the literature are those of Ridgway (U. S. Geol. Expl. 40th Par., 4, pt. 3, 1877:487) who found a juvenal male at Parley's Park (head of Parley's Canyon, Summit County, not far from Park City) on July 30, 1869, and of Hardy and Higgins (Proc. Utah Acad. Sci., Arts and Letters, 17, 1940:109) who record the species as taken at Washington, Washington County, May 10, 1940. On May 6, 1941, I shot the male of a pair from a cholla cactus on the west slope of the Beaver Dam Mountains, 3300 feet elevation, 5 miles north of the Utah-Arizona border, Washington County. It weighed 37.7 grams. The testes appeared similar in size, the left one measuring 12 x 7 mm.

On May 19, 1941, a Lark Bunting was shot in the barnyard of the Jeremy Ranch, 4300 feet, on the Jordan River, west of the Cudahy Packing Plant, Salt Lake County, Utah. It was a lone bird, as near as could be ascertained. The left testis measured 14 x 8 mm., the right testis 12½ x 10 mm. While considered a transient in Utah, the juvenile of Ridgway and the enormous size of the gonads of the two males of 1941 suggest that the species may nest in the state.—WILLIAM H. BEHLE, *Department of Biology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah, May 13, 1942.*

White-tailed Kites Feeding on House Mice.—Mr. Merle R. Gross of the United States Soil Conservation Service recently found a "family" of White-tailed Kites (*Elanus leucurus*) in the Granada Hills District, about 5 miles west of San Fernando, Los Angeles County, California. There were two adults and one immature bird. No nest was found, but the kites resorted for perching to a eucalyptus tree in a windbreak in the middle of an orange grove. The tree was about one-fourth mile from a house. Under this tree, on May 10, 1942, Mr. Gross picked up 46 whole pellets and about a dozen fragments. These I analyzed with the following results:

Prey species	No. of individuals in pellets	No. in fragments	Total	Per cent of total
House mouse (<i>Mus musculus</i>)	50	12	62	83.78
Meadow mouse (<i>Microtus californicus</i>)	8	8	10.81
Harvest mouse (<i>Reithrodontomys megalotis</i>)	3	1	4	5.41
Totals	61	13	74	100.00

Though there are previous records of other rodents eaten by White-tailed Kites, this is the first instance that has come to my attention in which *Microtus* was exceeded in numbers by any other prey species. Mr. Gross reports that house mice were extremely abundant at about this time, and became especially available when the cover crops were turned under in the orchards. It appears that they were common enough and sufficiently active by day to make up for the local scarcity of meadow mice in the San Fernando Valley.

In picking up pellets from under a roost, there is always a danger that they may be misassigned and erroneous conclusions drawn. In this case, the absence of insects would seem to rule out small

owls and the absence of pocket gophers and *Peromyscus* (both abundant locally but inactive by day) the large owls; the condition of the bone fragments would appear to eliminate the other hawks of the region.—R. M. BOND, *Piedmont, California, June 30, 1942.*

Shower Bathing of a Spotted Towhee.—In the long dry summers of coastal central California, chaparral-dwelling species may find water locally scarce except as it collects on foliage from the nightly fogs that blow in from the ocean. Use of this supply for drinking is probably widespread, but its availability for bathing had not been appreciated by me.

The morning of July 29, 1942, was cool and foggy in Berkeley, and on the hillside at my home above Cerrito Creek in Contra Costa County, the trees and bushes were dripping with water. An adult Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculatus*) came to the feeding tray at 7:15 and ate some of the cracked grain offered there. It was a dejected looking individual, with bare patches of skin showing around the head, for it was in the middle of its annual molt; indeed it left a spotted tail feather behind on the tray. It flew but a short distance, stopping on top of a tangle of baccharis bushes and poison oak. At once it began scuttling about under and over the wet foliage, rubbing against it and shaking down drops from overhead. The wings were half spread and were fluttered in the fashion customary in bathing; also the bird bent the legs, crouching down rather than standing normally erect. It moved about within a radius of about two feet, always in the crowns of the bushes, three to four feet above ground. After approximately a minute of this the towhee moved on, but it was detected at a distance, perched, fluttering its wings and preening. The bath was not by my standards especially effective, as the bird was only slightly wet, but it had apparently satisfied an instinct at least. All this time there had been a pan of water on the feeding tray but it was small and fairly deep and evidently was not so stimulating of the bathing reaction as the natural supply of water.—ALDEN H. MILLER, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, July 29, 1942.*

Notes on the Occurrence of Some Pelagic Birds Off San Diego County, California.—The ever moving and changing stretches of the ocean offer many hazards and inconveniences to the ornithologist. Hence our knowledge of the birds which come and go over the open sea, seldom touching our shores, is limited when compared with the mass of information that has been gathered on the subject of land birds. The following notes and observations are submitted in the hope that they may provide a small addition to the published facts in the interesting field of pelagic birds.

The status of the Slender-billed Shearwater (*Puffinus tenuirostris*) along the Pacific coast, especially to the southward, appears to be rather uncertain. There are scattered records of birds found dead on the beach and of several collected specimens, but the occurrence of this species in large numbers in the winter of 1941-42, near La Jolla, California, is noteworthy.

The first of these birds to come to my notice was a dead female (now in the San Diego Natural History Museum) which I picked up on October 28, 1941, on the beach just north of La Jolla. It had evidently been dead for several days. On examination I found that its stomach and intestines were packed with food and that a fair quantity of fat lined the skin. Death probably resulted from the battering of recent heavy seas. The second bird was found dead, in an emaciated and somewhat decomposed condition, on October 30, 1941, near La Jolla. Two unidentified round worms over an inch long were found in its gullet. A third bird, very much decomposed, was found on November 4, 1941, on the Silver Strand about 4 miles south of Coronado.

I saw my first living Slender-billed Shearwater on November 5, 1941, 1½ miles off La Jolla. Several hundred Black-vented Shearwaters (*Puffinus opisthomelas*) were scattered over a large stretch of glassy sea surface. Among them, a few dark shearwaters were noted. One of these, a Slender-bill, was collected and is now a study skin in my collection. This group of Slender-billed Shearwaters was exceptionally easy to approach. Several times I was able to bring my skiff to within about ten feet of them before they reluctantly exerted enough energy to patter and glide several hundred feet before resting on the surface again. The stomach of the specimen collected was full of fish. This perhaps accounted for the sluggish actions of the birds.

In the late afternoon of November 29, 1941, I again looked for shearwaters off La Jolla. After proceeding over a mile from shore in my outboard motor boat, I encountered two Black Brant (*Branta nigricans*) floating on the water and numbers of Heermann Gulls (*Larus heermanni*) resting on kelp and driftwood, but no shearwaters. After about an hour's fruitless search, I noticed a long and narrow raft of what proved to be several hundred Brandt Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax penicillatus*) lying nearly submerged, with only their long necks and a spot of their backs above the surface. I cruised beside this linear group for perhaps 100 yards and then noticed two dark shearwaters on the water. Since it is difficult to be sure of the identity of such birds in the field, I shot one. It proved