

to be a Slender-billed Shearwater. The birds were very tame and the one collected was so gorged with fish that as I gathered it from the water several large fragments dropped from its mouth. These two individuals and a third one identified as the same species constitute all the shearwaters seen on this trip.

On December 4, 1941, after several days of heavy seas, one dead and one very weak Slender-billed Shearwater were found on the beach. The weakened bird died within an hour of the time it was found.

On December 16, 1941, while walking on the beach a little south of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, I noticed a large group of birds, about a quarter of a mile beyond the breakers. Anxious to see if there were Slender-bills among them I got my skiff and rowed out. The shearwaters, well over 200 in number, were apparently "chock full." They sat about lazily for the most part and few seemed able to summon the energy for a take-off. I watched several dive and appear again at the surface, swallowing large sardines. From two to five gulls were usually on hand and attempted to steal the fish, but each time the shearwater ducked back below the surface and apparently finished the meal under water. I was able to get very close to many of the birds and think that, except for about 70 or 80 Black-vented Shearwaters, they were all of the slender-billed species.

On December 25, 1941, five Slender-billed Shearwaters were found dead along a half mile stretch of beach north of La Jolla. The weather previous to that date had been very severe for nearly a week. On December 27, three more were picked up along this same stretch of beach.

Apparently the Slender-billed Shearwater is not as rare a visitor along our coast as the few published records would lead us to believe. Although this season may be one in which these birds have been unusually abundant, I am inclined to believe that they are generally more common than has been supposed. In the first place their appearance in the field is nearly identical with that of the common Sooty Shearwater. Thus their presence could easily be overlooked. Even dead birds in the hand can be puzzling, unless measured or compared with specimens of the Sooty. It is certainly possible that many dead shearwaters on the beach have been passed by as being of the larger species.

Stomach contents of four Slender-billed Shearwaters, which seemed of special interest, were: bird shot November 29, 1941, 15 small clear white quartz pebbles; one bird found dead on beach December 4, 1941, 25 round worms, 3 small pebbles; the other bird found on same date, several round worms and 2 small squid beaks; bird found dead on beach December 25, 1941, 78 small squid beaks and about 15 small round worms. Several other birds examined contained fish only.

Although the occurrence of the Ancient Murrelet (*Synthliboramphus antiquus*) is to be expected along the coast of southern California, the bird is perhaps still sufficiently rarely seen to warrant presenting the following records of this species. On January 2, 1935, a lone bird, now in my collection, was collected about a mile off La Jolla. Again on January 2, but in 1941, I collected two specimens from a small flock of eight birds less than a half mile from shore at La Jolla. Another small flock of six birds was seen later, farther out. The following day I returned, hoping to collect another specimen, but no Ancient Murrelets were to be found. Of the two secured, one is in the San Diego Natural History Museum and the other in my personal collection. On January 14, 1942, an energetic Ancient Murrelet, together with a Rhinoceros Auklet (*Cerorhinca monocerata*), was observed, while feeding just beyond the breakers in the churning froth only a few feet from the rocks in front of the La Jolla Caves. On January 15, 1942, a dead Ancient Murrelet was found.—KARL W. KENYON, *San Diego Society of Natural History, May 22, 1942.*

Melospiza melodia virginis a Synonym of Melospiza melodia fallax.—Dr. Clarence Cottam had the kindness to call to the attention of Dr. William H. Behle and myself (co-describers of *Melospiza m. virginis* from the Virgin Valley of Utah) the fact that *virginis* is identical with Baird's type of *fallax* from Pueblo Creek, Arizona. Through the courtesy of Dr. Alexander Wetmore, the United States National Museum has forwarded me this type and also the type of *Melospiza fasciata montana*. Since I am responsible for the taxonomic portion of the paper in which *virginis* was described (Condor, 44, 1942:122-124), I feel it my duty to declare the changes in nomenclature which are necessitated by my findings upon comparing these types with specimens of *virginis*. I agree with Cottam that *virginis* is a synonym of *fallax*. The type of *fallax*, a wintering bird, has a ruddy color and lacks black streaks; it is, therefore, a good representative of the song sparrow population breeding in the Virgin Valley and adjacent parts of Nevada. As previously pointed out, this population is racially distinct from, and geographically and ecologically isolated from *saltonis* and from the black-streaked song sparrows occurring at higher elevations to the north and east. The type of *montana* is identical with representatives of this latter population in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology; accordingly, *Melospiza melodia montana* should be reinstated as the correct name of the Mountain Song Sparrow.—JOE T. MARSHALL, JR., *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, August 19, 1942.*