

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

An Unusual Attitude in a Hawk.—In the Ibis for October, 1939 (p. 622), Mr. M. E. W. North records a curious attitude of the Black-shouldered Kite (*Elanus caeruleus*). "In February 1937 I watched a bird, perching on a tree, which had a curious habit of raising its tail till this stood vertical, or even sloped in the direction of the back so that its under-side was uppermost." This brought to my recollection that I had seen a similar habit in the White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus majusculus*), when I was studying the species in California in 1923. Under date of August 21, I find in my diary the following note: "A White-tailed Kite is still around; when at rest it frequently elevates the tail almost like a wren." Later I saw a kite with its tail so high over its back that the outline of the bird suggested the letter "V". I sketched this extraordinary attitude (for an accipitrine bird) but cannot find the drawing now. Evidently the habit is an ancestral one. It may be well known to other observers but I cannot recollect seeing it mentioned in any published accounts; in one of these the kite is said to tilt its tail several times in the manner of a Sparrow Hawk, but the pose with the tail elevated almost vertically is nothing like the pumping action of a Sparrow Hawk's tail which is simply a wagging motion to be seen in many birds and in several other species of hawks.—ALLAN BROOKS, *Okanagan Landing, B. C., March 8, 1943.*

Starling in Western Montana.—The spread of the Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) in the United States has recently been discussed by Wing (Auk, 60, 1943:74-87). He states that the first records in a new area are usually of a few winter stragglers. Such was the case of the first birds to come to my attention in western Montana. Five or six were seen in company with a wintering flock of Red-winged and Brewer blackbirds near Corvallis, Ravalli County, on January 25, 1941. I saw the Starlings again at the same locality the following week, but was not able to obtain specimens either time. More recently on November 14, 1942, I shot into a large flock of migrating Red-wings near Round Butte, Lake County, and obtained two Starlings along with several Red-wings. It is likely that there were several more Starlings present in this flock. I have not found recorded instances of the presence of Starlings in western Montana. Starlings were observed in eastern Montana near Billings, which is 300 miles east of the above-mentioned localities, on December 23, 1940, by Louis M. Moos and Donald Graves (Audubon Magazine, 43, 1941:135).—PHILIP L. WRIGHT, *Department of Zoology, Montana State University, Missoula, Montana, February 16, 1943.*

Flight Speed of the Mourning Dove.—On July 18, 1942, while driving between Woodburn and Donald, Oregon, I checked the flight speed of the Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*). The bird jumped off the road in front of the car and flew directly in front of it for more than three-quarters of a mile at a speed of from 30 to 35 miles per hour. It did not seem to be flying with special effort.—FRED G. EVENDEN, JR., *Oregon State College, Corvallis, Oregon, February 15, 1943.*

Speed of Flight of Mourning Doves.—Recent comment on the speed of flight of Mourning Doves (*Zenaidura macroura*) prompts me to record an observation made during a recent trip east. Just east of the Painted Desert, between Holbrook, Arizona, and Gallup, New Mexico, we were paralleled by a pair of flying Mourning Doves as we drove at 43 to 45 miles per hour. These birds flew beside us for well over a mile (noted as "1-2 miles"), finally turning aside. They were therefore flying at this rate for considerable distances, and apparently without any stimulus other than the well known "fixation of the image" which may have led them to fly beside us.—S. C. BROOKS, *Department of Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, California, February 16, 1943.*

Another California Record of the American Redstart.—On September 30, 1942, shortly after 9 a.m., an adult female American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*) was found in one of our water traps at Manor, Marin County, California. This particular trap is situated next to the American warblers' aviary which contains several examples of a number of species of this family of birds.

The redstart, upon being removed from the trap, was found to be in a somewhat emaciated condition. Moreover, the bird's upper mandible was considerably shorter in length than the lower one and presented a somewhat shriveled, atrophied appearance.

Because of its comparative rarity on the California list, an effort was made to maintain it alive for the aviary collection. Notwithstanding our painstaking efforts, it succumbed three days later, on October 3.

While some difficulty was experienced in the "breaking-off" process, that is, the weaning of