

A Cooper Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*) was seen at 4:25 p.m. on September 21, flying near the ship at 35° 13' N, 122° 06' W. Nearest land was Point Piedras Blancas, California, out of sight 48 miles northeast. The hawk seemed tired and once alighted in the ship's rigging. Later it was flying near five Sooty Shearwaters. Sunset this day occurred about 2½ hours later. The weather was clear and warm with no wind.

Two Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*) were seen at 57° 24' N, 150° 10' W. From this position the nearest land was Kodiak Island, 70 miles northwest. The owls were sighted at dawn on October 13 in an overcast sky with occasional mists. They stayed with the ship, occasionally alighting on deck, and did not leave until long after we had sighted land. I was able to walk up to one and to handle it, during which process it did not offer resistance or make any noise.

A flock of about eight Audubon Warblers (*Dendroica auduboni*) accompanied the ship northward for about half an hour at 8:30 a.m. on October 8 at 44° 10' N, 124° 40' W. Occasionally they alighted on deck. Nearest land was Cape Perpetua, Oregon, out of sight 25 miles east. Weather was foggy and windless, with a glassy sea.

With the flock of warblers were two Oregon Juncos (*Junco oregonus*). They were comparatively tame, permitting me within 3 feet; they foraged within 5 feet of passers-by. They remained in the vicinity of sacks of coal and potatoes, in the lee of the amidships superstructure. They were fed bread crumbs and water by the crew, but they also foraged on the sacks and drank condensed water vapor drops from the breather-pipes of the sanitary system. They remained aboard the next day, although land was clearly visible about 10 miles away. One was roosting that night in a crevice between sacks. It was seen the next morning in the same place until 6 a.m. That day the wind blew strongly all day and we were 60 miles south of the Queen Charlotte Islands.

On October 11 one was seen for the last time at the sack pile, its feathers fluffed in the rain. We were at the time 50 miles west of Graham Island. I believe that this bird was the same one which boarded us three days before; it rode northward 557 miles at a time when it should have been migrating southward.—JOHN A. GRAY, JR., Lt. (j.g.), U.S.N.R., June 14, 1945.

**Does the Russet-backed Thrush Have Defective Eyesight?**—When, during migration seasons, reports have been received of birds killing or maiming themselves by flying against glass windows or doors, at least 90 per cent of the victims identified by me have proved to be Russet-backed Thrushes (*Hylocichla ustulata ustulata*). As this species is by no means our most common migrant in southern California, some physiological deficiency appears to be indicated. The most natural assumption would be that the eyesight of the bird functions inefficiently, but that, of course, cannot be proved without further study.—G. WILLETT, Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, California, June 16, 1945.

**California Gulls Feeding on Midges.**—Though the California Gull (*Larus californicus*) has almost the status of a State bird in Utah in return for its help to Mormon pioneers in controlling the cricket plague of 1848, the bird is becoming over-abundant in Salt Lake and Utah valleys, where it is a menace to certain types of agricultural pursuits. This gull is well known as an omnivorous feeder: the greater the competition for food, the greater becomes the range of foods consumed. Cherry growers have complained that the gulls, knocking the cherries off the trees, destroy a good portion of the crop. On the other hand, where ground squirrels and prairie dogs are abundant, these birds are frequently observed following the road, feeding on animals hit by speeding motorists. On June 17, 1945, a California Gull picked up and swallowed a crippled chipmunk on the road near the divide of the Wasatch Mountains between Logan and Brigham.

Although the California Gull is well known to be a scavenger, it is a common experience in the West to see flocks of these birds following the plow and avidly consuming insect larvae, earthworms and other animal life that is exposed. They also commonly feed on the immature or emerging adult salt flies (*Ephidra*) that occur in great numbers in the salty waters of Great Salt Lake. Crippled ducks or other birds, especially those incapacitated by botulism, are readily preyed upon.

On June 19, 1945, some 2500 of these gulls fed in a flock following a 50- to 70-yard swath in the sagebrush and grass on the north end of Strawberry Lake, Wasatch County, Utah. Close observation revealed that they were feeding almost entirely on a large species of midge (chironomid) that had just emerged from the lake. In the areas where the birds had been feeding, fully 95 per cent of the insects had been consumed; on adjacent areas where the birds had not yet foraged, the insects were so thick as to form a cloud. Many of the insects were in the air; many more were attached to blades of grass and sagebrush. This emergence of the chironomid insects also caused a large concentration of Brewer Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) and Vesper Sparrows (*Pooecetes gramineus*).—CLARENCE COTTAM, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago, Illinois, August 10, 1945.