

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Notes on the Use of the Creosote Bush by Birds.—It is generally known that the extensive, pure stands of the creosote bush (*Larrea divaricata*) in the southwestern deserts seldom attract many birds. In the Tucson region of Arizona, we have walked through a mile of this inhospitable-looking shrub without seeing a single bird. However, when it occurs intermixed in or at the fringes of cacti, mesquite, and catclaw associations we have observed that a considerable number of birds make use of it.

Verdins (*Auriparus flaviceps*) and gnatcatchers (*Polioptila* sp.) forage in the bushes throughout the year, evidently finding some insect food. Occasionally during the winter we have seen Audubon Warblers (*Dendroica auduboni*) and, in the spring, Pileolated Warblers (*Wilsonia pusilla*) travelling from plant to plant searching the twigs. In April Cactus Wrens (*Heleodytes brunneicapillus*) begin to walk around the bushes peering upward into the branches for larger insects. When one is located it is caught by a quick jump. Then the wren usually climbs through the entire bush in search for more. This method is repeated at the next bush. Buds are nibbled by English Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) and House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), and we have seen both of these species pull off and crush the fuzzy fruits with their bills to get at the seeds inside. Although the creosote bush fruits ripen in enormous numbers each year, and are easily accessible, we have never observed any of the desert birds feeding on them regularly. We have a record of the Green-backed Goldfinch (*Spinus psaltria*) sampling the fruit, also. Occasionally the abundant yellow flowers are visited by the Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*).

English Sparrows sometimes break off the smaller, flexible green twigs and use them for the exterior part of their nests. Evidently the slender upright branches, the lack of support-forming intertwining twigs, and the scarcity of suitable forking make this shrub undesirable for nest location. The only nest we have ever observed in a creosote bush was that of a Black-tailed Gnatcatcher (*Polioptila melanura*), found on May 26, 1944, near Rillito Creek, 2½ feet above the ground in a small, slanting fork of a branch.—ANDERS H. ANDERSON and ANNE ANDERSON, Tucson, Arizona, May 3, 1946.

The Oregon Junco in Sonora, Mexico.—In "A Distributional Survey of the Birds of Sonora, Mexico," by A. J. van Rossem (Occ. Papers Mus. Zool., Louisiana State Univ., no. 21, 1945:300), *Junco oreganus montanus* is listed as a form of unverified occurrence. Van Rossem states that according to his notes a specimen had been taken by or for Griffing Bancroft, and that it had previously been identified as *J. o. shufeldti*, but that he believed it would fall under *montanus* as defined by Miller. This specimen, which I obtained from Bancroft several years ago, is now in my collection. The label bears the following data: "Ad. male. Arizona Ranch, 15 m. s. of Nogales, Sonora, Mexico. Feb. 17, 1929. Coll. J. Elton Green. No. 2230." On the reverse is an early identification: "J. or Shufeldti. V. R." and a recent identification, "Montanus. A. H. M." Miller adds "female?" Van Rossem notes that 15 miles south of Nogales should be 15 miles southwest of Nogales.—MAX MINOR PEET, Ann Arbor, Michigan, April 1, 1946.

Pacific Gull Color-banding Project, 1942-1945.—Earlier banding on this project, sponsored by the Western Bird-banding Association with the cooperation of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, was reported in the Condor (44, 1942:78). In spite of war circumstances, 2969 nestling gulls of two species were color-banded in the summers of 1942, 1944, and 1945. This brings the total color-banding for the summers of 1938 through 1945 to 14,629 nestling Western, Glaucous-winged and California gulls at fifteen nesting colonies.

Arrangement of Color-bands on Legs of Gulls

Colony	1942		1944		1945	
	right	left	right	left	right	left
Utah Lake, Utah:						
316 California Gulls	yellow		aluminum			
Vasco M. Tanner.	aluminum	red	red		yellow	
Great Salt Lake, Utah:						
1500 California Gulls		yellow				
A. M. Woodbury,	red	aluminum				
J. W. Sugden.						
Farmington Bay, Utah:						
383 California Gulls					red	aluminum
(also 417 aluminum only)			aluminum	yellow	yellow	red
A. M. Woodbury,						
and W. H. Behle.						