

in an attempt to copulate, and when this occurred, the duck in question would either fly a short way to rid herself of the dove or enter the water for the same purpose. None of the male Mallards bothered the dove at any time.

At this same location, a winter feeding area, there were usually three Wood Ducks (*Aix sponsa*), two females and one male. The dove completely ignored these female ducks, even when there were no female Mallards in the immediate vicinity. The Rock Dove was the only individual of his species in the area. Perhaps this was the reason for the dove's mis-matched mating attempts, although I can offer no opinion why he ignored the female Wood Ducks.—JOHN L. WOLFF, *Linnaean Society of New York, New York, N. Y., July 31, 1948.*

Songs of the Brown Towhee Evoked by Nest Robbing by Scrub Jays.—About noon on June 6, 1948, hearing a harsh, high-pitched note in the backyard of my home in Berkeley, California, I went out to find four Brown Towhees (*Pipilo fuscus*), presumably two pairs, fighting with two Scrub Jays (*Aphelocoma coerulescens*). Each pair of towhees attacked the jays, fluttering wide-spread wings and tails and uttering this harsh note. They then dropped to the ground a few feet away from where I stood, showing no fear of me. In their excitement the resident towhees intermittently attacked the other pair of towhees in what I took to be a defense of territory. One jay was driven off, but the second, after being driven from the nest bush three times, was no longer molested.

In a few moments I moved within a short distance of the nest bush and observed the jay eating from the nest before it flew away. Upon examining the nest two eggs were seen, one of which was partly eaten. I then withdrew about ten feet and observed the actions of the towhees upon their return to the nest. One of the towhees arrived and nervously hopped around in the surrounding shrubs before moving up near the nest, where it gave a few faint "tsip"s. It then went to the nest and removed the broken egg in two trips. The last time, as it hopped to the rim of the nest, it sang a high-pitched, warbled song not unlike that of a House Finch, but so faint that I could barely hear it. I could see the bird making singing movements with its bill and throat, and I checked the surrounding bushes to be sure no other birds were present. The bird then sat on the nest, which now contained but one egg. Meanwhile the other bird of the pair was chipping nearby and occasionally uttering a wheezy note that I had heard commonly during the preceding week, and which Quaintance (Condor, 43, 1941:152-155) has called the "mate call." The next day the birds were not heard in the yard and a check of the nest on the following day showed the other egg to be missing and the nest deserted. The towhees were also missing, and they have not been seen in their territory to this date.

A summary of the notes and songs used on this occasion is as follows: a *chip* used commonly and varied with excitement of territorial and nest defenses, a thin *tsip* on approaching the nest, the mate-call, a harsh distress note uttered during the attack on the jays, and a high-pitched, warbled note by a bird on the rim of the nest, resembling the song of a House Finch. These last two are in addition to those reported by Quaintance (*op. cit.* and Condor, 40, 1938:97-101).—HENRY E. CHILDS, JR., *University of California, Berkeley, California, June 16, 1948.*

The Cowbird Moves Northward in California.—Until recent years the humid coast belt of northern California has been free of the Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*). The writer had never expected that this parasite would reach the dense groves of fir and redwood in Humboldt County. However, sufficient data from Humboldt County have now accumulated to warrant listing the Cowbird as at least a casual summer visitor in this section. Observations on six nests each containing an egg of the Cowbird and sight of a pair at close range seem to indicate that this species is more common than thought even though it still is more or less localized. It occurs on suitable open river bars, avoiding the heavy timber.

Two Cowbird eggs were noted in June of 1941, on the Eel River Bar, in the vicinity of Fernbridge, Humboldt County, California. One was in the nest of either a Pileolated Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) or an Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*). The single egg was in the nest and no other eggs were present. The other egg was found in the nest of a Western Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*), which contained one egg of the flycatcher as well. These two eggs could well have been deposited by the same female. A third Cowbird egg was noted that same year in June on the Van Duzen River Bar at Alton, Humboldt County, California.

Observations were discontinued during the war years, but in June of 1947 another Cowbird egg

was found in the nest of a Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*) at Shaws Crossing on the Mad River Bar, Humboldt County, California. This nest contained three eggs of the sparrow and one of the Cowbird.

In June of 1948 the writer finally observed a pair of Cowbirds. The birds were feeding on a lawn at Hoopa, Humboldt County. Both male and female were feeding with a small flock of Brewer Blackbirds. A Chipping Sparrow (*Spizella passerina*) nest was located nearby which contained one egg of the Cowbird and one of the sparrow.

On the Eel River Bar at Miranda, Humboldt County, California, another egg was noted during the last of June. This egg was found in the nest of a Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica aestiva*), from which the three rightful eggs had been tossed to the ground.

As no specimens have been collected, the subspecies concerned is not certainly known, but *Molothrus ater obscurus* has been taken at Hyampom, Trinity County, California. All of the localities in Humboldt County are west of this station and both the Mad River and Hoopa sites are farther north as well.—ROBERT R. TALMADGE, *Eureka, California, July 7, 1948.*

Notes on Actions of the Audubon Caracara.—On March 11, 1947, my brother and I were camped about one mile south of the watering stop of Piedra, 22 miles southeast of Guaymas, Sonora. Here we observed an Audubon Caracara stalking along the railroad track about 100 feet away. Presently it came down the bank to the edge of a small grassy opening where another adult caracara was standing near the base of a small clump of mesquite. The two faced each other about one foot apart when suddenly the first caracara threw back its head until the tip of the black crest feathers rested on its back. While in this strange position, with throat feathers fluffed out, it uttered a peculiar sound which I recorded as *cre-a-ak—croa-ak—crea-ak*. Within a minute, as we watched less than fifty feet away, the same performance was repeated. It was probably some sort of a mating call. The other adult, possibly a female, stood still during these performances.

Later the caracara which gave this exhibition walked to a log about two feet in length and three or four inches in diameter. It seized the wood with its feet, gave a tug, and easily pulled it out of the way. Then it stepped forward to where the log had lain and started searching for insects. Not finding any, it scratched like a hen for a few seconds and examined the scratchings for what they might contain. Again finding nothing, it once more scratched and searched without results and then stalked back to where the other caracara was stationed. The two then ambled off and were soon lost to view in the mesquite brush.—ERNEST R. TINKHAM, *Tucson, Arizona, April 20, 1948.*

Black Swift Nesting in Southern California.—On July 4, 1948, I found a Black Swift (*Nephoecetes niger*) nesting at an elevation of approximately 3000 feet near Hemet in Riverside County, California. The nest site was typical for this species: under a waterfall in a moss-filled grotto and concealed by ferns and other hanging aquatic plants. The nest was a well-rounded, high-lipped cup made completely of growing moss and placed only a few inches from the running water about four feet above the surface of a large pool. The single white egg was heavily incubated.

The bird which was incubating at the time of discovery sat very closely and did not flush until almost touched. The bird left the nest without a sound and flew straight down the canyon and out of sight. We continued our trip up the canyon and on our return late in the afternoon, the nest was again approached and this time the bird was closely observed upon the nest.—EDWARD M. HALL, *Whittier, California, July 17, 1948.*

Bird Records from Northeastern Montana.—I spent most of the summer of 1943 at the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Sheridan County, Montana, studying bird populations and environmental conditions before and during an outbreak of botulism. Several observations there and westward to Phillips County added to the records in Aretas A. Saunders' "A Distributional List of the Birds of Montana" (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 14, 1921). The distribution file and collection of the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U. S. Department of the Interior also aided in the evaluation of the observations and furnished several additional records.

Nycticorax nycticorax. Black-crowned Night Heron. In Saunders' Hypothetical List, page 173. The Fish and Wildlife Service has records of its occurrence at Albion, Fallon County, May 9 and 12, 1939, on the authority of Mrs. J. E. Butcher; and at Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, in 1941,