

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,

on the authority of T. C. Horn. I saw from 1 to 20 at several localities on the Medicine Lake Refuge during July and August, 1943, and 4 at the Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge, Phillips County, on August 19, 1943.

*Coturnicops noveboracensis*. Yellow Rail. Not recorded by Saunders. On July 24, 1943, I followed one bird for an hour or more at close range in a dense three-square-arrow-grass marsh on the Medicine Lake Refuge. In one short flight it appeared to be about as large and dark as a sora and to have a long white stripe on the back edge of its wing. I heard one in the same place on July 27. As described in Peterson (*A Field Guide to Western Birds*, 1941:52), its call consisted of ticking notes that alternated in groups of two and three. The middle note of each group of three was strongly accented. The habitat, behavior, and call were about as described by R. Fryer (*Canadian Field Naturalist*, 51, 1937:41) and Thomas S. Roberts (*The Birds of Minnesota*, Vol. 1, 1946:449).

*Charadrius hiaticula*. Semipalmated Plover. Not recorded by Saunders. Winton Weydemeyer first recorded this species at Fortine, Lincoln County, Montana, September 2, 1928 (*Auk*, 47, 1930:98). I saw from 1 to 6 at several localities on the Medicine Lake Refuge during July and August, 1943.

*Arenaria interpres*. Ruddy Turnstone. Not recorded by Saunders. The Refuge files reported its occurrence at the Medicine Lake Refuge on July 9, 1941. I saw 2 on the Refuge on July 31, 1943.

*Calidris canutus*. Knot. Recorded once by Saunders, page 171. I saw one on the Medicine Lake Refuge on July 20, 1943, and two in the same place on July 24. Both were in spring plumage.

*Cistothorus platensis*. Short-billed Marsh Wren. In Saunders' Hypothetical List, page 175. I saw one on the Medicine Lake Refuge on July 30, 1943; heard one in another locality on the Refuge on July 30; and heard one again on August 10.

*Spiza americana*. Dickcissel. Not recorded by Saunders. Chas. F. Hedges first recorded this species from the vicinity of Miles City, Custer County, in 1921 and 1922 (*Condor*, 26, 1924:228-229). I found it fairly common at several places in the Missouri Valley in July, 1943, as follows: 2 just south of Glasgow, Valley County, on July 10; 2 four miles west of Poplar, Roosevelt County, on July 10; 1 six miles west of Brockton, 1 five miles west of Brockton, and 1 four miles west of Brockton, all in Roosevelt County, on July 10; 1 on the Medicine Lake Refuge on July 14; and 2 at Medicine Lake village, Sheridan County, on July 17. L. B. Potter recorded the dickcissel from Eastend, Saskatchewan, on June 16, 1940 (*Canadian Field Naturalist*, 57, 1943:71).

*Passerherbulus caudacutus*. Leconte Sparrow. In Saunders' Hypothetical List, page 175. The Fish and Wildlife Service has a record of one seen at Johnson Lake, Roosevelt County, on June 6, 1910, by E. A. Preble and H. E. Anthony. An immature male was collected at Lake Bowdoin, Phillips County, on October 3, 1915, by Alexander Wetmore (No. 3077). The specimen is now in the Fish and Wildlife Service Collection in the National Museum (Catalogue No. 261492). Its identity has been confirmed by Dr. John W. Aldrich. I saw one and heard its characteristic song on the Medicine Lake Refuge on August 6, 1943.

*Ammodramus caudacutus nelsoni*. Nelson Sharp-tailed Sparrow. Not recorded by Saunders. A male was collected at Johnson Lake, Roosevelt County, on June 6, 1910, by H. E. Anthony (No. 104). The specimen is now in the Fish and Wildlife Service Collection in the National Museum (Catalogue No. 228632). Its identity has been confirmed by Dr. John W. Aldrich. I saw from one to several at various localities on the Medicine Lake Refuge from July to September 1943.—NEIL HOTCHKISS, *Fish and Wildlife Service, Laurel, Maryland, May 21, 1948*.