

*Dendroica townsendi*. Townsend Warbler. In the Charleston Mountains on October 7, 1953, I saw two in Kyle Canyon and one at Willow Creek. On October 12 one was at the summit of Charleston Peak. I saw two at Pine Spring in Hidden Forest, Sheep Range, on October 10.—CLARENCE COTTAM, *Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C., December 21, 1953.*

**The Ash-throated Flycatcher at Vancouver, British Columbia.**—On October 7, 1953, while banding birds at Marpole, Vancouver, British Columbia, I captured an Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*). It was an adult male in delayed molt and was taken by means of a net set up in a mixed deciduous growth of maple, alder, and other broad-leaved trees. The area is fairly moist. As far as I can ascertain, this is the first record of this species in Canada. It is now specimen no. 38710 in the Kenneth Racey Collection in Vancouver. On October 11, 1953, I captured at the same place another individual of this same species. This one was banded and released.—WM. M. HUGHES, *Vancouver, British Columbia, February 19, 1954.*

**Report on the Two Native Passerines of Nihoa, Hawaii.**—On December 21 and 22, 1953, and on March 18, 1954, I had the opportunity, thanks to the United States Coast Guard, to land on rarely visited Nihoa Island, an isolated mile-long islet in the Hawaiian Archipelago located about 300 miles west-northwest of Honolulu. Since the sole two land birds of Nihoa are endemic and have not, apparently, been observed since 1940 (Vanderbilt and deSchauensee, *Notulae Naturae*, Acad. Nat. Sci., Phila., 86, 1941:1-14), notes on the continued existence and feeding and breeding habits of these little known species may be of value. Nomenclature follows Amadon (*Bull. Amer. Mus. Nat. Hist.*, 95, 1950:155-270).

*Psittirostra cantans ultima*. Laysan Finch. Family Drepaniidae. This bird remains reasonably numerous on Nihoa for we saw 15 to 20 individuals during two to three hours of observation on a limited part of the island in December. We found both sexes in rather bright yellow plumage then, compared to the dull coloration of Vanderbilt's specimens taken in August, 1940, but apparently not yet breeding. Two old nests were found—one, I think the first such nest site known for any drepaniid, in a rocky recess near the base of a cliff. In March in this same cliff nest, distinctive because of a number of large seabird feathers built into it, I found a young Laysan Finch not quite fledged. I believe this is the first breeding information of this drepaniid, although eggs of its related form on Laysan are known from May. Adding to its previously known habit of eating sea bird eggs and other animal and plant foods, I repeatedly observed in December the Laysan Finch eating the small, green flower heads of *Chenopodium sandwicheum* (which forms much of the native plant cover of Nihoa). Also, I observed one bird picking out the still partly green seeds of *Portulaca caumii*, a plant endemic to the island. This "finch" still allows approach to within three or four feet—a testimony to its effective isolation. The related form, *P. c. cantans*, survives on Laysan Island over 600 miles away.

*Acrocephalus familiaris kingi*. Nihoa Miller Bird. Family Sylviidae. The only relative of this reed warbler in the Hawaiian Archipelago, *A. f. familiaris* from Laysan, has been extinct for over thirty years. Vanderbilt apparently found the Nihoa species fairly common in 1940, and collected nine specimens. We found the bird still present in December, 1953, but saw just two individuals during our limited observation.—FRANK RICHARDSON, *Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, Hawaii, April 1, 1954.*

**Observations on the Sandhill Crane in Northeastern California.**—Recent literature dealing with the Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*) in California has in most cases been restricted to information on migration and wintering grounds. According to Leopold (1951, "Game birds and mammals of California—a laboratory syllabus," Berkeley, California), there have been no records of Sandhill Cranes nesting in California since 1931. However, it is the opinion of the writers that Sandhill Cranes have nested in scattered locations throughout northeastern California each year but observations have not been recorded and published. It is the objective of this paper to record spring and summer observations on Sandhill Cranes in northeastern California for the years 1948 through 1953.

Every spring since 1948, a waterfowl breeding ground survey has been carried on in California. The survey consists of making counts of breeding pairs of waterfowl on all major production areas within the state. The breeding ground survey in northeastern California in 1948 consisted only of ground counts but in 1949 the ground surveys were supplemented by aerial coverage. Since 1950, the

method of survey has consisted mainly of aerial coverages carried out during the last week of May and the first week in June. Each year the number and status of cranes was recorded as supplementary information to the number of breeding waterfowl. The cranes were recorded as pairs when seen together. Single cranes were recorded when only one bird was present at a nest site or in a particular

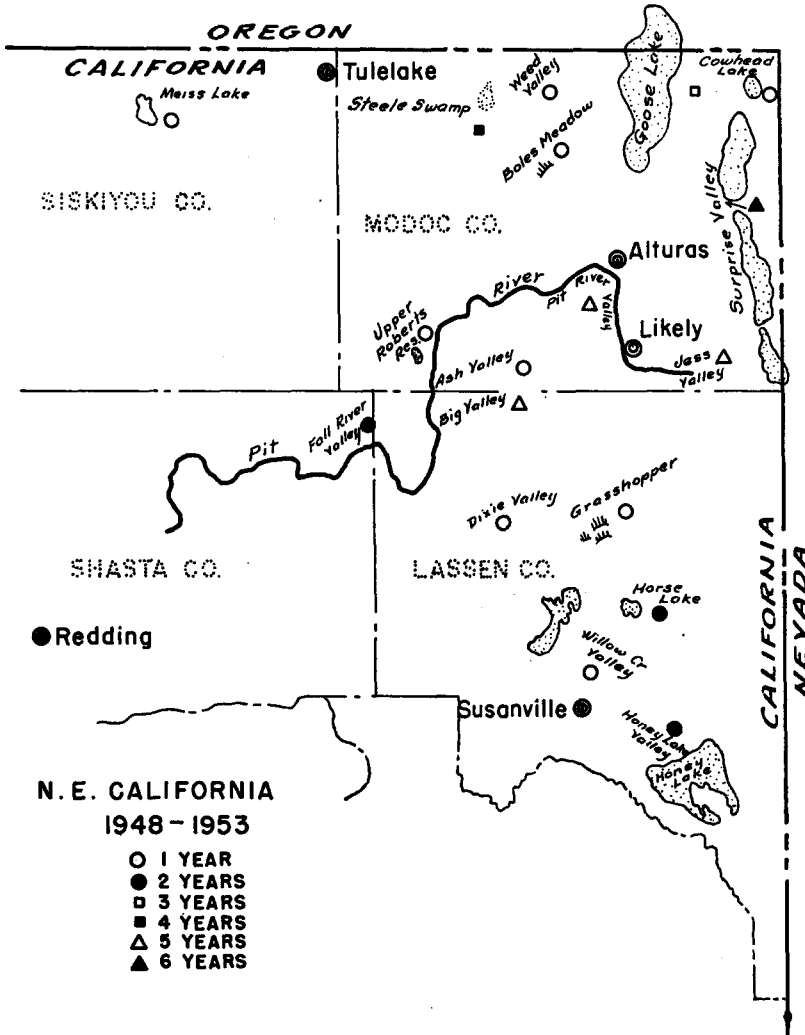


Fig. 1. Map showing localities from which Sandbill Cranes are reported.

area. Young birds of the year were recorded when seen and are so designated in the following tables. Three or more cranes seen together constituted a group. The nests recorded were observed from the air and no ground checks of the nests were made to determine the fate of nests. The number of cranes and nests in any of the categories in the following tables may or may not represent the total number in any particular area. A map of the areas covered in this paper is shown in figure 1. Summaries of observations on each area are given in tables 1 and 2.

In all of these areas cranes were found in remote localities where wet meadows existed and human interference was at a minimum. Table 2 indicates a reasonably stable population in northeastern California with fluctuations during extreme conditions of weather and water abundance. It is believed

Table 1  
Localities Surveyed and Total Number of Cranes Found in Successive Years

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Big Valley, Lassen Co.	6*	9	0	2	14*	9*
Fall River Valley, Shasta Co.	0	0	0	2	2	0
Goose Lake, Modoc Co.	7	0	0	2	4*	0
Honey Lake Valley, Lassen Co.	0	0	0	0	2*	4*
Horse Lake, Lassen Co.	0	0	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	2	2*
Jess Valley, Modoc Co.	5	9	0	13*	29*	22*
Pit River Valley, Modoc Co.	9*	8	0	10*	14*	15*
Steele Swamp, Modoc Co.	2	4*	0	2	4*	0
Surprise Valley, Modoc Co.	22*	20*	24*	2	22*	6
Boles Meadow, Modoc Co.	0	0	0	2	0	0
Willow Creek Valley, Lassen Co.	0	0	0	2	0	0
Upper Roberts Reservoir, Modoc Co.	0	0	0	0	2*	0
Grasshopper Valley, Lassen Co.	0	0	0	0	2	0
Cowhead Lake, Modoc Co.	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	3*	Not surveyed
Weed Valley, Modoc Co.	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	0	4	0
Meiss Lake, Siskiyou Co.	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	0	3*	0
Ash Valley, Modoc Co.	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	2
Dixie Valley, Lassen Co.	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	0	0	2*
Totals	—	—	—	—	—	—
	51	50	24	37	107	62

\* Nests found or young observed; latter included in estimate of total cranes present.

that through the dry years the population may shift to wetter areas in northeastern California or move on north to more suitable nesting habitat. During the dry period prior to 1951, areas such as Honey Lake, Grasshopper Valley, and Horse Lake had such limited rainfall and run-off that little surface water existed and as a result cranes were absent in the nesting season. Since 1951 northeastern California has experienced a wet cycle and virtually all areas have had surface water at some time in each year resulting in new marsh and meadow growth which furnished nesting habitat. With the advent of another dry period the areas may revert back to dried flats with little vegetation, resulting in another shift of the crane population.

Table 2  
Summary of Yearly Observations on the Sandhill Crane in Northeastern California

	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Pairs	12	17	9	14	39	16
Singles	....	....	....	4	3	10
Groups	22	16	3	....	10	18
Young	5	....	3	5	16	2
Nests	4	3	....	....	5	5
Total cranes	51	50	24	37	107	62

The large number of cranes recorded in 1952 (107) may have been due to the generally wet season and a late cold spring retarding the nesting season about two weeks. This may have resulted in more cranes staying in California that normally would have gone further north. The opposite may have

occurred in 1953 when a warm early spring caused early northward migrations of most waterfowl. Some of the cranes that normally nest in California may have wandered further north before the nesting season began. This may account for the decrease in population in 1953 even though water conditions were ideal in California.—A. E. NAYLOR, A. W. MILLER, and M. E. FOSTER, *California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California, March 2, 1954.*

**Sandhill Cranes at Meiss Lake, Northern California.**—The fact that around 1500 Sandhill Cranes (*Grus canadensis*) during their spring and fall migratory flights make a stop of three or four weeks at Meiss Lake, Siskiyou County, California, seems to be unrecorded in ornithological literature. According to older farmers in that region the cranes have been stopping there for as far back as they can remember. Members of the Fish and Wildlife Service, with headquarters at Tule Lake, Siskiyou County, were not aware of the occurrence, nor does Walkinshaw mention the Meiss Lake locality in his book, "The Sandhill Cranes" (1949).

While a few Sandhill Cranes of the large form nest at Meiss Lake, the migratory birds stopping there are all the smaller form known as the "Little Brown Crane." Around the last of February or early in March the Little Brown Cranes arrive, first a vanguard of a few, then, a week or so later, in full number. Meiss Lake is just south of the Oregon-California state line. The birds feed and rest at the lake for all of March and sometimes well into April; around the fifteenth of October they are back again to feed and rest a few weeks before continuing south. Farmers report that they are becoming more and more wary each year with the increase in farming, travel and hunting in that area.

Except for the Malheur Bird Refuge in the extreme southeastern corner of Oregon, from where it is reported both Greater Sandhill Cranes and Little Brown Cranes stop during migratory flights, we have been unable to find any record of the Little Brown Cranes stopping anywhere in Oregon or Washington. The thought occurred to me that the Meiss Lake birds might be from the Malheur Bird Reserve—that possibly they might cross southwestward to Meiss Lake instead of flying directly to their winter feeding grounds in California and farther south in the fall and vice versa in the spring. In the fall of 1951, the cranes did not arrive until the first of November. It seemed a good time to inquire whether there had been any observation and banding of cranes at Malheur Reserve. This would be a basis for examining the movement postulated above. Mr. R. C. Erickson, Biologist, replied in part as follows: "Your remarks regarding the possibility of a movement of cranes from Malheur Refuge to the Meiss Lake locality are worthy of consideration for several reasons. In the first place the number (1500) coincides well with the number which occupy the grainfields of Malheur Refuge each fall, though this number also includes a proportion of Sandhill Cranes as well as Little Brown Cranes. Secondly, the build-up of numbers is rather gradual in summer in July, August, and September to a peak early in October, the main exodus occurring ordinarily during the second week of the month. This would coincide with your customary mid-October arrival date at Meiss Lake. Thirdly, the departure of the cranes from the refuge, too, was delayed about two weeks this fall, perhaps on account of the relatively warm autumn with few sustained periods of low temperature during October, and most of them left the refuge the last week of October. As mentioned in your letter, a reliable method of checking the correctness of the assumption that cranes may fly from Malheur Refuge to Meiss Lake would be the study of returns on banded birds. We have no records on that subject."

The older farmers of the region ruefully tolerate the small damage the birds do to their crops in the spring, but the newer farmers, considering the present high price of grain, are not so tolerant. Cranes damage young, sprouting grain, but do most damage on young alfalfa and clover by pulling up young plants in the fields where crops are just starting. In older, established fields where plants are firmly rooted, the damage appears to be slight. Suspicion that resident farmers do shoot at the cranes prompted the Fish and Wildlife Service to provide the farmers with flare guns in the spring to chase the birds from freshly planted fields. Crop damage by ducks, geese and cranes appears to be a mounting complaint among the ranchers, and it is becoming an increasing problem as more land is placed under cultivation.—EDITH RUTENIC McLEOD, *Klamath Falls, Oregon, January 10, 1954.*

**Turkey Vulture Wintering in Northern California.**—Although the Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*) is a common summer resident in the interior mountains of extreme northern