

into a dive, then veered off just as the falcon would have sped into its intended prey. The Killdeer had ample time to dive toward the island for cover but it remained flying about in the same small area.

The falcon continued to climb and dive on the Killdeer, but after eight thrusts the Killdeer hugged the water and shore so closely that it eluded the falcon, which soon left the area. This event was the first witnessed by the observer in which a prey species appeared to decoy from its young an avian predator of such superior flying power.—WAYNE H. BOHL, *Tucumcari, New Mexico, April 11, 1955.*

Gambel Quail and Water Supply on Tiburón Island, Sonora, México.—As there remains a question in the minds of some as to the water requirements of the Desert or Gambel Quail (*Lophortyx gambelii*), notwithstanding the work of Vorhies (Am. Nat., 62, 1928:446-452) and of Gorsuch (Univ. Ariz. Biol. Sci. Bull., 2, 1934:41-42), the following field observations are presented as further evidence that populations of this species do not require the proximity of free surface water.

From April 22 to 24, 1954, large numbers of quail were observed by E. Tad Nichols of Tucson and myself in the desert brush along and near the beaches on the east side of Tiburón Island, Sonora, México, and several males were heard calling. Fresh spring water is scarce on the island; very small amounts can be obtained only at a few well-known points, and the Seri Indians carry it from inland to their occasional beach camps. Our field headquarters was at such a Seri camp. The nearest fresh water to the position where the quail were observed was approximately 8 miles inland by trail, or a distance of approximately 6 miles airline.

This distance is at least 10 to 11 times greater than the daily cruising range (= home range) of species of quail for which data are available (Gorsuch, *op. cit.*: 48-49). For example, the daily cruising range of the Bob-white (*Colinus virginianus*) is known to be approximately one-fourth of a mile. Even if the daily cruising range of the Gambel Quail is as much as 2 miles, which is probably as much as 3 to 4 times the actual magnitude, the distance to fresh water was still 3 times as great.

The observations were made in April during the particularly dry period which precedes the summer rainfall season. (On Tiburón Island and the adjacent mainland of Sonora, the precipitation pattern is reversed from that in California and Nevada; the wet season is the period from June to September.) There can be little question but that the Gambel Quail on Tiburón Island obtain water required for metabolic processes from the abundant succulent vegetation on the island, as this species does, for example, in southern Arizona, where and when free surface water is not available during the drier periods of the year. If the Gambel Quail on the east coast of this arid island drink water other than that which occasionally falls during the summer rainfall season, it must be sea water. It is beyond reasonable doubt that the Gambel Quail occurring on Tiburón Island do not require free surface water of any kind for their successful maintenance during the dry periods of the year.—CHARLES H. LOWE, JR., *Department of Zoology, University of Arizona, Tucson, November 29, 1954.*

Taxonomic Comments on the Western Wood Pewee.—In volume 9 of the "Reports of Explorations and Surveys . . . for a Railroad . . . to the Pacific Ocean . . .," (1858:189-190) Baird hes'tantly applied the name *Tyrannula richardsonii* Swainson (Fauna Bor.-Am., 1831:146) to a series of wood pewees from the western United States and México. But he noted that Swainson's type, from Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, "differs in the proportions of the wings, etc., . . . in some other points appearing more nearly allied to *S. fuscus* [= *Sayornis phoebe*]." Baird thought, however, that "The discrepancies in the proportions of the quills [= primaries] may have been caused by their incomplete growth during the moulting season."

The matter was again discussed by Coues (Birds Northwest, 1874:247), who first noted that Swainson's plate of *Tyrannula richardsonii* is "very wrongly colored" for a wood pewee; but he then followed Baird, stating that "the different wing formula may be reconciled upon the supposition that the type of Swainson's species was a young bird . . ." He also noted that "The plate . . . [is] not so far out of the way for the very young bird, which is rusty-tinged . . ." His conclusion was that "In view of the facts that Swainson's bird was a *Contopus*, and that the present [Western Wood Pewee] is the only one ever known to inhabit the ascribed locality, the identification may be safely made."

No one since Baird and Coues seems to have questioned the matter. Phillips, however, became