

On May 4, 1954, near the town of Blanca, Costilla County, Colorado, a female Say's Phoebe (*Sayornis saya*) was found dead on her nest. The nest was under the eaves of a shed and had been under observation since nest construction began. The bird had laid three eggs and dissection revealed a well-formed egg in the lower oviduct ready to be laid. Cause of death could not be determined because of the decomposed condition of the specimen, but speculation indicated that the bird may have died due to insecticidal toxicants used on ingested insects. Possibly, also, some malfunction occurred which prevented normal passage of the egg.—JOHN H. BRANDT, *Truk, East Caroline Islands, May 11, 1958.*

Vermilion Flycatchers Nesting in San Diego County, California.—The A.O.U. Check-list, fifth edition (1957) regards the Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) as wintering "sparingly in California (Santa Barbara, San Diego) . . ." On February 18, 1958, at Santee, San Diego County, California, a female Vermilion Flycatcher was observed starting a nest. Mr. Kerry Muller who has studied birds in this area for several years said that a male Vermilion Flycatcher had been seen for about a year. This nest was completed and the eggs were laid on March 4, 5, and 6, respectively. On March 22 one egg had hatched but on March 23 one egg and the young bird were gone and one egg remained in the nest. The nest was deserted but the same pair built another nest about 50 yards to the west. This nest was also completed and two eggs were laid which disappeared from the nest and the birds again deserted. They returned to the same tree in which they had built their first nest and here were successful in raising a brood of three which left the nest on May 18-19. At this writing the female has another nest with three eggs.

Another male Vermilion Flycatcher had been observed during the winter months on the grounds of the United States Naval Hospital in Balboa Park, San Diego, California. Dr. Leon L. Gardner undertook the observation of this bird. On February 23 he saw a female and on March 22 nest building was observed. On April 6 three eggs were in the nest and on April 24 the young were leaving the nest. This pair is now in the process of raising a second brood. A second male Vermilion Flycatcher was seen in the company of this pair on the hospital grounds but it apparently had no mate.

As far as I am able to ascertain, these are the first nesting records of this species in western California.—JAMES E. CROUCH, *San Diego State College, San Diego, California, June 9, 1958.*

European Starling Nesting in the San Joaquin Valley, California.—On May 12, 1958, I found a nest of a European Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) in Micke Grove Park, San Joaquin County, approximately four miles due south of Lodi, California. This nest was located in a small live oak (*Quercus wislizenii*) about 17 feet above the ground in a cavity in the tree. The tree is located in a grove of live oaks and white oaks (*Quercus lobata*) which is much used as a picnic area. Both parents were seen making many trips to and from the nest bringing insects to the young, the exact number being unknown as the cavity was too deep to allow the young to be counted. However, from a distance several young birds were seen as they appeared at the nest opening to receive food. Mr. John Roumasset, a warden with the California Department of Fish and Game, and Zerifa Kroll both saw the parents bringing food to the young on May 14. On May 17 the nest was empty and presumably the young had left. This species has been observed in flocks in this immediate area during the winter of 1956-57 and in the past winter, but it is believed that this is the first nesting record in the San Joaquin Valley.—RONALD T. REUTHER, *Micke Grove Zoological Garden, Lodi, California, May 19, 1958.*

Breeding of the Starling in Southern California.—Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) were first reported in California in 1942 (Jewett, *Condor*, 44, 1942:79). Since that date they have been seen in various localities in steadily increasing numbers, but these were usually winter observations. To our knowledge, the records of breeding herein reported are the first for southern California.

On March 28, 1958, Tramontano observed an adult Starling on electrical wires in Artesia, Los Angeles County, California. The heavily traveled street was in a residential area with numerous dairies in the vicinity. A row of palm trees (*Washingtonia filifera*) lined each side of the street. A single adult was observed in the same area on April 5, 17, 29, and May 2, 1958, and a nesting site was discovered

in one of the palms on May 8, 1958. The nest, approximately 35 feet from the ground, was located within hanging dead fronds and thus was only partly visible. Several Rock Doves (*Columba livia*) were nesting in the crown of the same tree. Only one adult Starling was seen. This bird, presumably a female, made repeated trips to and from the nest at approximately five-minute intervals. Food was brought to the young and excrement was removed each round trip. The young could be heard distinctly at each feeding although they were not visible from the ground.

On May 18, 1958, Tramontano discovered two more Starlings seemingly nesting in another palm four-tenths of a mile north of the above site on the same street. One spent considerable time within the fronds while the second sang from nearby electrical wires. On May 20, 1958, another visit was made to this tree by Rainey and Tramontano and again two adults were seen. One flew from the fronds with an object in its bill and dropped it to the ground from an adjacent tree. It proved to be one-half of a whitish-blue egg shell, the color of which compares precisely with eggs of Starlings as illustrated in Butler's *British Birds With Their Nests and Eggs* (vol. 2, pl. 6). Rock Doves and House Sparrows (*Passer domesticus*) were the only other birds nesting in these palms, and their eggs are readily distinguished from those of Starlings. On the same day, the young at the first nest were observed with the aid of binoculars. Only one young bird could be seen perched on the edge of the nest each time the adult brought food. Its size, approximating that of an adult, indicated that departure from the nest was imminent. In addition, on the same day, still another adult was seen flying into a nearby palm. However, it could not be determined whether there was a third nest in this tree. It was not possible to collect any of these Starlings owing to the residential area in which they were observed.

On May 4, 1958, two of us (Rainey and Van Hoose) obtained a female Starling 5.4 miles east of Holtville, Imperial County, California. This female in the company of another Starling, presumably a male, flew from a woodpecker hole situated 30 feet up in a large cottonwood tree. Repeated efforts to obtain the second bird failed. A study skin of this Starling (LBSC ♀ ad. 2068) was deposited in the Long Beach State College Vertebrate Collections. The female had numerous developing ova; the two largest measured 12 by 10 and 9 by 8 millimeters. Seemingly, egg-laying was imminent or had commenced. There was a well-developed brood patch. The collecting locality was in a small grove of five cottonwoods and six palms (*Washingtonia* sp.) surrounded by irrigated farmland. Other birds observed in the grove were: House Sparrows nesting in the palms, a pair of Bullock's Orioles (*Icterus bullockii*), Western Kingbirds (*Tyrannus verticalis*), a pair of Gila Woodpeckers (*Centurus uropygialis*), Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), and Brewer's Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). Intensive collecting over a three-day period in eastern Imperial County did not reveal additional Starlings.—DENNIS G. RAINEY, S. G. VAN HOOSE, and JOHN TRAMONTANO, *Long Beach State College, Long Beach, California, June 20, 1958.*

Four Recent Records from Southeastern New Mexico.—An Hudsonian Godwit (*Limosa haemastica*) was seen at Bitter Lakes Refuge, near Roswell, New Mexico, from about May 16 to 20, 1958. It was observed by Robert Garrett, Bruce K. Harris, James H. Sikes, and the writer. The bird was distinguished from the Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*) which is somewhat common here, by the reddish underparts and the white patch at the base of the tail, clearly observable when the bird was in flight. It was quite gentle and fed in shallow water near Dowitchers. Frequently when feeding the entire head was immersed. Apparently no previous record of its occurrence in New Mexico has been published.

The Vermilion Flycatcher (*Pyrocephalus rubinus*) has nested for two and probably three consecutive years at Diamond A ranch, 20 miles west of Roswell, Chaves County, New Mexico. On July 10, 1957, I saw a pair feeding young out of a nest in a hackberry tree. On June 12, 1958, I photographed a pair feeding young out of a nest in a cottonwood about 200 feet from the 1957 nest. Mr. Thompson, the ranch manager, believes the birds were there in the summer of 1956. I have observed the species here with some regularity in spring and fall in recent years. Mr. J. Stokley Ligon of Carlsbad, New Mexico, wrote that no actual nesting record for eastern New Mexico exists although the species is seen at times in the vicinity of Carlsbad during the nesting season. The nesting range has been established in New Mexico as far east as the Rio Grande Valley and north to Socorro. This observation seems to represent an eastward extension of approximately 150 miles.