

(1) Writing of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers (*Sphyrapicus varius*), Beal (U.S.D.A. Biol. Surv. Bull. 37, 1911:1-64) stated that "cambium, or the inner bark of trees, was eaten every month, but most in winter and spring. The greatest consumption is in April, 48.95 per cent . . ." (2) Pynnönen (Ann. Soc. Zool. Fenn., 9, 1943:1-60) has described the bark-eating of the Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*) in Finland. On December 6, 1934, for example, he observed an individual which visited a single spot on a birch tree eight times for this purpose, but he further states that the habit did not become regular until March. Both of these species drill holes to obtain sap. The sapsuckers can obtain sap in mid-winter in Maryland, as described elsewhere (Kilham, Auk, 73, 1956:451-452), and Great Spotted Woodpeckers may drill holes for sap, as described by Witherby *et al.* (Handbook British Birds, vol. 2, 1940:284) among others. My hypothesis is that Red-headed Woodpeckers, as well as sapsuckers and the Great Spotted Woodpecker, may obtain sap in an alternate way by consuming bark into which it has permeated, and, possibly, become concentrated by evaporation, following repeated wounding of a tree in a single spot.—LAWRENCE KILHAM, *Bethesda, Maryland, January 23, 1959.*

The Starling Arrives in San Diego, California.—Sixty-nine years after the original American stock of Starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) was released in New York City, the species has finally reached the southwesternmost county in the United States. On February 4, 1959, the writer observed two Starlings at the intersection of 11th and C streets in downtown San Diego, California. Both birds flew low overhead, permitting positive identification; one Starling, already in breeding plumage, had the characteristic yellow bill coloring and the unmarked, iridescent green breast. This is the first recorded occurrence of the species in San Diego County, although it was reported in California (Siskiyou County) as early as 1942 (Jewett, Condor, 44, 1942:79) and has recently been recorded in Imperial County and as a breeding bird in Los Angeles County (Rainey, Van Hoose, and Tramontano, Condor, 61, 1959:57).—KEN STOTT, JR., *Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, February 4, 1959.*

More Observations of the Least Petrel and Pale-footed Shearwater Off Southern California.—The Least Petrel (*Halocysterna microsoma*) was considered by Grinnell and Miller (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 27, 1944:45) to be a "late summer or early fall vagrant" in the waters west of San Diego and only four occurrences for the state of California have been published to date. Observations of this species during the late summer and early fall of 1958 might indicate that this species occurs regularly in small numbers at this time in the extreme southern waters of the state. On September 1, 1958, about 40 individuals of this species were observed by me together with larger numbers of Black Petrels (*Loomelania melanis*), Leach Petrels (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*), and Ashy Petrels (*Oceanodroma homochroa*) about 5 miles east of Pyramid Cove, San Clemente Island. Prolonged observations of these Least Petrels revealed them to be easily separable in the field from the other three species of petrels and a discussion of their field characteristics might be in order so as to aid in future identification.

When the members of our party first sighted petrels, it was evident at once that among them were some noticeably small birds with swift, erratic flight that kept them close to the ocean surface. Even when seen unaccompanied by other petrels, their very small size was evident. The boat gave chase, but at full throttle (about 18 knots) we could not maneuver fast enough to get a clear shot at them, although several were attempted, and so none was collected. In addition to their small size (about two-thirds that of the Ashy Petrels and one-half that of the Black Petrels) and characteristic swift flight, as contrasted to the fluttery flight of the Ashy Petrels, no whitish areas were visible on the under sides of their wings; such is to be seen in the Ashy Petrels. The very best field mark of the Least Petrel, which was easily seen when these birds were close to the boat, was the rounded or wedge-shaped tail as compared to the forked tails of the other petrels. The tail was also shorter proportionally than that of the other species seen. These latter field characteristics were especially evident when the birds veered and turned.

On September 13, 1958, six more Least Petrels were seen at a point about 8 miles west of Point Loma, San Diego County, and they were successfully photographed in motion pictures.

To date, all published observations of the Pale-footed Shearwater (*Puffinus carneipes*) along the California coast have been of birds reported near Monterey. On September 1, 1958, our party observed a single individual of this species about 15 miles east of the southeastern tip of San Clemente Island (approximately latitude 32° 50'N, longitude 118° 10'W). The bird when first sighted, was resting on the water in the company of some 40 Pink-footed Shearwaters (*Puffinus creatopus*). The boat gave chase immediately and as the bird flushed and flew the dark wing-linings and flesh-colored feet were seen clearly. Its flight was noted to be slow and somewhat sluggish. The afore-mentioned characteristics distinguished it at once from the abundant Sooty Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*). Grinnell and Miller (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 27, 1944:43) considered this species to be a "rare, though possibly regular, visitant in spring, summer, and autumn." This observation constitutes the first record of the Pale-footed Shearwater from southern California waters.—ARNOLD SMALL, *Los Angeles, California, January 22, 1959.*

Brown Thrasher in San Diego, California.—On November 25, 1958, in Golden Hill Park in San Diego, California, I observed a Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*) for more than a quarter of an hour. Its russet back and tail and its heavily streaked breast were clearly visible. It finally took refuge in some bushes to escape harassment by two Mockingbirds. My wife and I found it again on November 26, and I saw it on November 27. The noise made by the bird in scattering leaves while feeding on the ground gave away its whereabouts in the underbrush. Each time it was in the same general area. A Brown Thrasher, presumably the same bird, was seen in this area by Louis L. Grimm of San Diego on December 21. The most recent published record for the Brown Thrasher in California is that of a bird collected at Joshua Tree National Monument in 1945 (Russell, Condor, 49, 1947:131). —ARTHUR MORLEY, *San Diego, California, February 11, 1959.*

The Eastern Brant at Humboldt Bay, California.—On November 23, 1958, a specimen of the Eastern or Light-bellied Brant (*Branta bernicla*) was taken on South Humboldt Bay, in Humboldt County, California. This appears to be the third record of this form in California and the fifth on the West Coast. The first specimen taken in California was reported by Bryant (Condor, 16, 1914:183) from near Bird Island on Arcata Bay, Humboldt County, January 30, 1914. The second was killed on Tule Lake Wildlife Refuge, Siskiyou County, on October 20, 1941 (Harrison, Condor, 44, 1942:130). The other two records are from Washington in 1929 and 1933.

I acquired the recent specimen from Bill Lyman and party of Eureka, California. The bird had been shot from a flock of four brant, three of which were Black Brant. The Eastern Brant was an adult female in good condition and fine plumage. Bill Lyman was kind enough to donate the specimen to Humboldt State College where it will be preserved in the museum of the Division of Natural Resources.—STUART L. MURRELL, *Humboldt State College, Arcata, California, December 27, 1958.*