that different releasing and directing stimuli are controlling these motions and that they therefore differ in biological function.

The observations of perch-scratching in emberizines further complicates our understanding of the distribution of head-scratching methods among birds, for now three, instead of two, variables must be investigated. Perhaps perch-scratching does not occur outside the Emberizinae, in which case it becomes a special instead of a general problem. Are these three scratching methods exactly equivalent, or does a different complex of stimuli release and direct each type? It is not within the scope of this paper to consider fully the biological function and motivation of head-scratching motions, but I suggest that this will need to be done before a complete understanding of the distribution of motions can be gained.

Because perch-scratching has added new problems and because a much higher variability than first expected (Simmons, *op. cit.*) has been found in the method of head-scratching used, taxonomic conclusions based on the type of scratching utilized should be considered tentative until all such behavior is better understood.

My sincere thanks go to Mrs. Margaret Nice for her many suggestions concerning the manuscript of this article and about the subject of head-scratching.—JACK P. HAILMAN, *Bethesda, Maryland, June 23, 1959.*

Some Additional Records of the Skua from California.—Prior to 1944 there were but four specimens and a single sight observation of the Skua (*Catharacta skua*) for California (Grinnell and Miller, Pac. Coast Avif. No. 27, 1944:160). Between 1944 and 1959 there have been more observations of this species off California than the total to 1944. In view of the comparative rarity of this bird and the vagaries of its appearances here, it might be well to outline some of the known records since the publication of Avifauna No. 27. Increased interest by amateur and professional ornithologists in searching for and observing pelagic birds has probably accounted in part for some of the following records. However, some years (1945, 1947–50, 1952–53, 1955) passed without any observations of this species although numerous pelagic trips were made in the late summer and early fall of these years. Notable flight years were 1956 and 1957, the latter being nothing short of remarkable. Some explanation might be found in examination of oceanographic conditions in late 1956 and in 1957. The year of 1957 was known as the year of warm water and southern fish, during which ocean temperatures were raised 2°F. to 5.5°F. along the Pacific coast from Crescent City, California, to Baja California and some tropical species of fish were taken off the coast of Washington.

A single Skua was observed at Santa Monica Beach on February 10 and 20, 1946, by Alma Stultz, Alan Morgan, and others (Pyle, Annotated Field List of the Birds of Southern California, 1953:23); another was seen at almost the identical place on April 4, 1951, by Lasky (Condor, 54, 1952:175); one specimen was collected (the fifth from California waters) on October 3, 1954, by Howard Cogswell several miles northeast of southeast Farallon Island (Audubon Field Notes, 9, 1955:52); a single bird was seen in the San Pedro Channel on March 21, 1955, by Vivian Ross and Ruth P. Emery (Audubon Field Notes, 9, 1955:284); two were seen on September 29, 1956, by Dean B. Fisher, 27 miles southwest of Point Conception (MS); at least eight were seen (some within 20 feet) on September 30, 1956, by Dean B. Fisher in the area from 5 miles northwest to 3 miles south of southeast Farallon Island (Audubon Field Notes, 11, 1957:55); one was seen 6 miles southeast of Pyramid Cove, southeast end of San Clemente Island on August 13, 1957, by me and one was seen on August 29, 1957, by John Bishop south of the southeast end of San Clemente Island (Audubon Field Notes, 11, 1957:428); one was seen on September 22, 1957, by some members of the Los Angeles Audubon Society southwest of Santa Cruz Island (Audubon Field Notes, 11, 1957:429); at least six (with a total of ten separate sightings, including three in view at once and photographed sitting on the water) were seen on October 5, 1957, by me at points from 7 to 12 miles west of Monterey; and one bird was seen on October 4, 1958, northeast of Catalina Island by G. S. Suffel (MS).—ARNOLD SMALL, *Los Angeles, California, February 11, 1959.*

Another Record of the Orchard Oriole in California.—Several times in the month of March, 1958, a black and chestnut-colored oriole was seen in a large rattlebox shrub (*Crotalaria capensis*) which is in my yard in San Diego, California. The bird was taking nectar from the canary-colored

flowers in characteristic oriole fashion. The color and markings agree with those of the Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) which has been recorded only once before in California at Eureka (Davis, Condor, 35, 1933:119). One brief visit of the oriole on March 30, 1958, was recorded on fourteen feet of 16mm. motion picture color film. James E. Crouch of San Diego State College confirmed the identification on viewing this film.—MYRTLE E. JOHNSON, *San Diego, California, February 15, 1959.*

Occurrences of the Mockingbird at the Northwestern Margin of Its Range.—Vagrant Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos*) have been recorded heretofore in northwestern California north to Ferndale, Humboldt County, where one was seen repeatedly in 1922 (Grinnell and Miller, Pac. Coast Avif. No. 27, 1944:345). Recently I have detected the species twice at points farther north in this area. On March 14, 1957, one appeared with a flock of Cedar Waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) in Eureka, Humboldt County. At Gold Beach, about 5 miles north of Orick in this county, one was seen and heard singing on May 26, 1959.—KEN LEGG, *Eureka, California, January 26, 1959.*

Changes in Winter Bird Species Composition of Two Habitats in San Miguel County, New Mexico, After Three-fourths of a Century.—Seventy-six years ago Charles F. Batchelder (Auk, 2, 1885:121–128, 233–239) spent December 4 to 22, 1882, collecting bird specimens and describing habitats frequented by the various species in the vicinity of Las Vegas Hot Springs, San Miguel County, New Mexico. In December of 1958 observations were made by me on the bird species composition in two of these same habitats and the results are here compared with those obtained by Batchelder.

One site is occupied by an open stand of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) situated on a steep south-facing canyon slope 1.3 road miles above the junction of the effluent of the hot springs and the Gallinas River. The understory vegetation here consists primarily of a sparse representation of scrub oaks (*Quercus* sp.) and blue grama grass (*Bouteloua gracilis*). The second habitat consists of streamside vegetation downstream from the canyon mouth for a distance of about one mile. The vegetation consists largely of a narrow corridor of tall cottonwoods (*Populus angustifolia* and *P. wislizeni*) with an understory of shrub willows (*Salix* sp.). A series of alfalfa fields borders the cottonwoods. A few abandoned fields and fence rows support variable stands of weedy annuals of which the sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*) is most conspicuous.

Five visits were made to each habitat between 8:00 a.m. and noon in the period from December 6 to 28.

For the most part the birds most frequently observed are those also recorded by Batchelder. Gray-headed Juncos (*Junco caniceps*) and Pine Siskins (*Spinus pinus*) are the most abundant birds of this season. The Pygmy Nuthatch (*Sitta pygmaea*), Steller Jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), Brown Creeper (*Certhia familiaris*), and Townsend Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) are characteristic birds of the pine habitat and there appear to have been no important changes in the winter bird species composition in the habitat since 1882.

The species characteristic of the cottonwood habitat at the present time are the Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica*), Common Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*), Song Sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*), and Downy Woodpecker (*Dendrocopos pubescens*). Magpies and crows apparently are new additions to the habitat while no individuals of the Water Ouzel (*Cinclus mexicanus*) and Green-winged Teal (*Anas carolinensis*), both reported as being common by Batchelder, were observed at any time. The changes that have occurred in species composition are probably related to agricultural practices. The absence of the Green-winged Teal and the Water Ouzel is believed to be related to changes in stream environment resulting from diversion of stream flow for irrigation storage purposes. A diversion dam, established about forty years ago, near the canyon mouth presently allows only a meager water flow along the original stream bed. No pools remain which might attract waterfowl and the reduced current apparently does not provide an environment attractive to the Water Ouzel.

The occurrence of magpies and crows cannot be attributed to any great alteration in physical environment since the gross vegetation mosaic is similar to that of 1882. It seems likely that changes in land usage have contributed to the appearance of these species.—W. H. RICKARD, *New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas, New Mexico, June 1, 1959.*