

pulling out of a stoop and one of the pigeons flying in a little circle about eighteen inches across and almost hovering. The falcon curved back, but the pigeon managed to elude it, yet continued to fly in a very small circle. On the next pass the falcon, slowing almost to stalling speed, reached out its feet and grabbed the pigeon from the air, flying with it across a wide flat toward a timbered ridge about a quarter of a mile away.

I hurried toward the house to get the binoculars but had not gone inside when the flock of pigeons again flew past full speed toward the loft, hotly pursued by another mature Peregrine Falcon, this time a large female. The pigeons made the shelter of the loft and this falcon, too, flew across the flats toward the timber on the ridge.

Upon checking with binoculars, the falcon with the pigeon was found sitting on the side limb of a tall dead cedar snag. The pigeon, gripped by the neck, hung down below the limb, apparently dead. The larger falcon flew about the perched bird, made a couple of half-hearted passes at it, and then flew along the ridge a little way and perched in another tree.

Suddenly into the field of the binoculars came a Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), wing-tips back, travelling at very high speed. The falcon with the pigeon screamed and took off, still carrying the pigeon, and dropped steeply down the ridge toward the flats in the opposite direction to the incoming hawk. The Red-tail did a beautiful twisting turn with scarcely any loss of speed and curved down and under the flying falcon. What happened then is none too clear; my impression was that the hawk turned upside down as it went under the falcon. In any event the pigeon was hurled from the feet of the falcon for a distance of some thirty feet and was immediately followed down by the Red-tail, which at once began to deplume the pigeon. It was set upon by both falcons which spent some five minutes screaming and diving at it, but it paid them scant attention and retained the pigeon.

This piracy may be more pronounced in the Puget Sound region than elsewhere. Wintering buteonid hawks in this area must feed primarily on birds, as there is no sizeable rodent population of any kind here.—FRANK L. BEEBE, *Provincial Museum, Victoria, B.C., Canada, April 21, 1960.*

Additional Distribution Records of Some Birds in Interior Alaska.—A number of observations on the distribution of birds in interior Alaska have come to my attention in the past few years and are recorded herewith.

Aythya americana. Redhead. On May 27, 1960, I saw a full-plumaged male Redhead at Smith Lake, near College. This locality is about 200 miles northwest of the Tetlin area where Hansen reported a breeding population in the summer of 1959 (Condor, 62, 1960:136-137).

Aythya collaris. Ring-necked Duck. Since the first specimen of the Ring-necked Duck in interior Alaska was taken on August 7, 1953 (Kessel, Condor, 57, 1955:372), several additional sight records have been made in the College area. Several of us watched a male at Smith Lake on May 19, 1957; Robert W. Kelly photographed a pair at Smith Lake on May 18, 1958; Earl L. Schene reported another pair from Goldstream Valley about 5 miles west of Ester on May 18, 1958; and a pair and a single male frequented Smith Lake between May 21 and May 27, 1960. Heinrich K. Springer watched a single bird, apparently an immature male, swimming in a small, ice-surrounded pool on October 9, 1960, about 3 miles east of Fairbanks.

Charadrius vociferus. Killdeer. These plovers appear to be only stragglers in Alaska; Gabrielson and Lincoln (Birds of Alaska, 1959) cite only four localities north of the Alaska Peninsula where they have been seen: Kuskokwin River, Mountain Village on the lower Yukon River, Tolugak Lake in the Brooks Range, and Point Barrow. Adding to these localities, I saw two of these birds on the fields of Creamer's Dairy Farm, between College and Fairbanks, on May 12, 1953; none has been seen in the vicinity in succeeding years.

Aphriza virgata. Surf-bird. Until now the only definitely known breeding localities for the surf-bird have been in McKinley National Park (Dixon, Condor, 29, 1927:3-16) and in the Forty-mile River area of eastern Alaska (lat. 64° 15' N, long. 143° W; Murie, Auk, 41, 1924:231-237). On June 25, 1952, however, I came upon an adult male Surf-bird with a downy chick at the top of a small, dome-shaped rise on Eagle Summit (lat. 65° 30' N, long. 145° 30' W) near the Steese Highway. The top of the dome is about 4000 feet in elevation and is largely bare, supporting a sparse, alpine *Dryas*-fellfield association. As I reached the top of the dome, the adult flew toward me and gave a broken-wing distraction display. I prostrated myself and after watching for about five minutes

saw the chick move at the far edge of the dome, the area from which the adult bird had originally approached me and away from which it had moved during its distraction display. The chick, which proved to be a female, weighed only 15.9 grams and was probably only a day or two old; as it tired in my hand, it relaxed and assumed a curled, pre-hatching position. Only one adult and one chick were seen on the dome, and after a period of observation they were both collected. They are catalogued as UA 766 (chick) and UA 765 in the University of Alaska Museum. The adult male weighed 133.2 grams and the right testis measured 3.5×5 mm.

Another breeding record was obtained at about 4000 feet elevation on Mastodon Dome, several miles south of Eagle Summit, on June 11, 1953. Here, in a habitat similar to that just described, Ronald O. Skoog flushed a Surf-bird from four eggs.

Since recorded observations of this species away from the coast are few, two other records are worth citing: While climbing at over 3000 feet on Mt. Drum at the northwest end of the Wrangell Mountains, George B. Schaller saw five Surf-birds on May 23, 1954. Wilbur L. Libby, while in a small saddle at the top of Victoria Mountain (lat. $65^{\circ} 48' N$, long. $146^{\circ} 56' W$) in the White Mountains, saw five of these birds on July 2, 1955, and a pair on July 5, 1955. These latter observations, coupled with the breeding records from Eagle Summit and the Forty-mile River area, suggest that Surf-birds nest in suitable habitats throughout the Tanana Hills, from the Alaskan-Yukon border to the White Mountains.

Limosa haemastica. Hudsonian Godwit. This relatively rare godwit, according to Gabrielson and Lincoln (*ibid.*), has not been recorded in Alaska since 1907, and they state that "it is not probable that it will be found again in the Territory." We have in the University of Alaska Museum, however, a specimen (UA 200) of an adult female in summer plumage collected by Calvin J. Lensink on the Iditarod Flats of the Iditarod River (lat. $63^{\circ} 10' N$, long. $158^{\circ} 30' W$) on June 24, 1951. Another specimen (UA 1067) was collected by Ludwig J. Rowinski on August 1, 1957, at Small Lake (lat. $67^{\circ} 22' N$, long. $143^{\circ} 48' W$), about 70 miles northeast of Fort Yukon. This latter bird was a lone, fall-plumaged male feeding on a windrow of dead vegetation along the shallow shore of the lake; it weighed 285.6 grams.

Chordeiles minor. Common Nighthawk. On the evening of July 12, 1958, near College, a nighthawk circled about directly overhead for about five minutes, calling clearly; it was observed by Frederick C. Dean, Ludwig J. Rowinski, and Gerald A. Vogelsang. The only other Alaskan records north of the parallel 60° are a dead bird found by an Eskimo chief about 10 miles north of Allakaket (lat. $68^{\circ} N$, long. $153^{\circ} W$) in the fall of 1923 (Murie, Auk, 42, 1925:270-271), and an adult male collected by Brower at Barrow on July 6, 1941 (Bishop, Zool. Ser., Field Mus. Nat. Hist., 29, 1944: 181-190). Cantwell (Osprey, 3, 1899:25), however, reported nighthawks breeding at the headwaters of the Sixty-mile River in Yukon Territory, just across the Alaskan-Yukon border; and on August 9, 1956, I saw and heard a number of these birds along the Klondike Highway about 80 miles east of Dawson, Yukon Territory.

Sturnus vulgaris. Starling. The first sight record of a Starling in the interior of Alaska was made on May 4, 1960. While with a class at Creamer's Dairy Farm, I watched a Starling for a short period as it flew about the barns and pasture. It seemed extremely wary and restless, and it would land only momentarily before taking flight again. It soon disappeared beyond the fields and has not been seen since.

Empidonax hammondi. Hammond Flycatcher. The fact that there are no published records of this flycatcher in interior Alaska is misleading. The Hammond Flycatcher is probably the commonest resident flycatcher in the Fairbanks area during the summer, and it is the earliest to arrive in the spring. The species prefers a habitat of relatively open woods formed by the tall, deciduous trees of poplar (*Populus tremuloides* or *P. balsamifera*) or white birch (*Betula papyrifera*); conifers apparently are not an environmental requirement. I have often stood in such a woods in late May and heard two or three males calling concurrently.

Phylloscopus borealis. Arctic Warbler. I heard Arctic Warblers singing and watched several feeding on June 20, 1958, in a patch of dwarf birch (*Betula glandulosa*) along a draw beside the Denali Highway, about seven miles west of the Maclaren River. In view of the date and the behavior of these birds, I judged them to be residents in the area. This locality represents an extension of over a hundred miles eastward from the previously known range of this species.

Spizella passerina. Chipping Sparrow. There are only a few published records of Chipping Sparrows in Alaska: Brower collected one at Point Barrow on September 18, 1929 (Bailey, *Birds of Arctic Alaska*, 1948), and Francis H. Fay observed one at Gambell, St. Lawrence Island, on May 23, 1956 (Fay and Cade, *Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool.*, 63, 1959:73-150). There apparently has been, however, a range extension along the Tanana River Valley into interior Alaska by birds from Yukon Territory. On the morning of May 27, 1958, I watched a male Chipping Sparrow as it sang almost continuously from a stand of tall willows at College. The specimen (UA 1068) weighed 11.5 grams, and the testes measured 8×5 and 6×5 mm. In 1959 four nesting records were obtained along the Tanana Valley. At Tetlin Lake Donald E. McKnight found a nest with 4 eggs on July 3, 10 inches up in a rose bush (*Rosa acicularis*); and in the same area James King found one with 3 eggs on July 6 in a 3-foot spruce. Svein Haftorn found two nests containing young in white spruce at Big Delta on July 10, 1959 (Haftorn, *Det. Kgl. Norske Vidensk. Selsk. Forh.*, 32, 1959:107-111).—BRINA KESSEL, *University of Alaska, College, Alaska, April 18, 1960.*

Notes on Vaux and Chimney Swifts.—There have recently been two instances of Vaux Swifts (*Chaetura vauxi*) seeking night roosting shelter in chimneys near San Diego, California. On May 4, 1960, Mrs. Edith Heller brought to the Natural History Museum in San Diego a specimen of a Vaux Swift for verification of identity. She reported that shortly after sundown, on the evening of May 3, a flock of about 25 of these swifts came down the fireplace chimney into the living room of a residence in the Point Loma district of San Diego. The day had been misty with intermittent showers, and there was a prediction of sharper showers during the night so that conditions were such that the birds were seeking shelter for the night. After some commotion one bird was captured; this is the swift she brought in and it is now a specimen in the collection of the museum. Mrs. Heller also stated that a like occurrence had taken place in May five years ago at the same residence when a much larger flock had descended the chimney for a night's shelter.

On preparing the specimen I found a small amount of material in the stomach. As little seems to be recorded of the food of this species, it was saved for study by Dr. F. X. Williams and Mr. C. F. Harbison, entomologists on the museum staff. The contents had been heavily digested and appeared to be a black pasty mass, highly mutilated, with no pieces large enough to see with the naked eye. However, with the aid of a microscope, they were able to find insect fragments representing three orders: Lepidoptera, Diptera and Hymenoptera. These flying insects had apparently been caught by the bird before it sought shelter for the night.

Mrs. Heller subsequently returned with a further report. On the evening of April 23, 1960, a flock of swifts estimated to have been 500 birds flew down the fireplace chimney at the residence of Mrs. Robert Mosher in La Jolla. They descended the chimney in such numbers that most of the soot that had accumulated on the chimney walls was brought with them into the room. The police were called to help remove the birds and next day the interior decorators were called to repaint the walls and revamp the furniture! The writer found that April 23 had been overcast and showery as was the 24th, so without question the migrating swifts were seeking shelter from inclement conditions.

A further record of importance is the capture of a Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*) within the boundary of California. The bird was a male and is now in the collection of the San Diego Society of Natural History (no. 13055); it was collected in the willow-cottonwood association, 1 mile north of Potholes, Imperial County, California, on the Colorado River, May 6, 1930, by Samuel G. Harter. This record adds another species to the list of California birds.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, May 20, 1960.*

Notes on the Nesting of the Roadrunner.—In Bent's Life Histories (U. S. Nat. Mus. Bull. 176, 1940) the account of the nesting of the Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*) states (p. 41) that "it is supposed that only the female incubates"; it is also suggested that it had not been proved that second sets of eggs are laid by females that had already succeeded in bringing out one brood.