

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

A Spectacular Case of Cnemidocoptiasis (scaly-leg) in the White-breasted Nuthatch.— While examining specimens in the collections of the Moore Laboratory of Zoology, Mr. John Hubbard found and pointed out to me a study skin of the White-breasted Nuthatch, *Sitta carolinensis umbrosa* (cat. no. 14966), in which the entire tarsus and toes of both legs are grossly

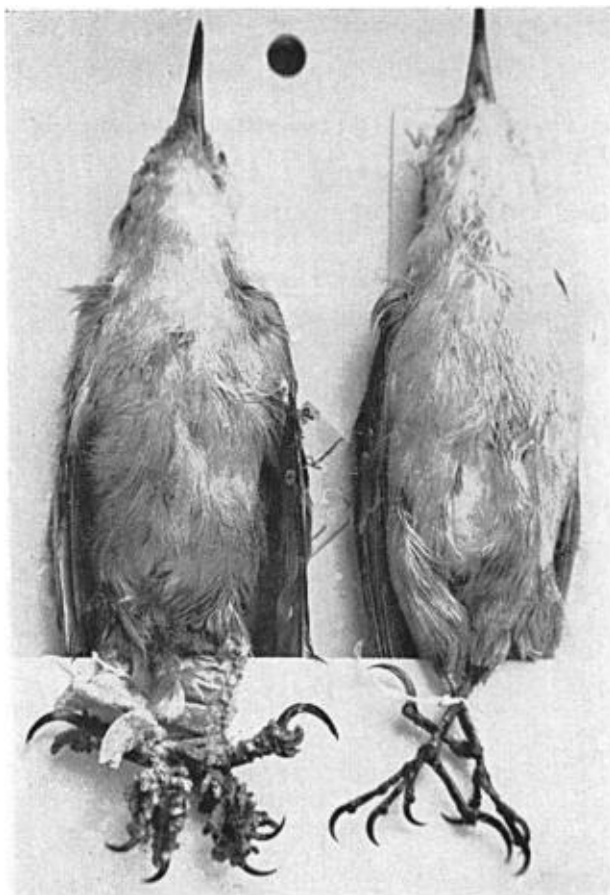


Fig. 1. Specimen on left shows infection by the mite *C. mutans*. Specimen on right is normal. (A white card has been inserted between the legs and tails of the specimens for clear illustration of the condition.)

encased with the bract-like encrustation caused by the mite *Cnemidocoptes mutans* (fig. 1). Infestation by this mite has most recently been reported on by Poulsen (*Avic. Mag.*, 70, 1964:69). The condition in the nuthatch closely resembles that reported by Olive and Schultz (*Auk*, 69, 1952: 90-91) in a male Redwinged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) but is more severe, with some of the "bracts" projecting about one-half inch outward. The nuthatch is a male, testes " $\frac{1}{2}$ size," collected at Rancho Batel, 6 mi. "eastwardly" from Santa Lucia, Sinaloa, México, on April 1, 1936, by Chester C. Lamb. The bird seems to have been otherwise in normal condition. Lamb's field notes mention the collecting of the bird but say nothing of the condition or any abnormal behavior of

the individual. In a telephone conversation with me, Lamb recalled shooting the nuthatch, and remembered that it had behaved normally and that the condition of the legs and feet was evident only after the bird was in hand. The infestation of this mite has never before been reported in the White-breasted Nuthatch. I am grateful to Mr. Hubbard for calling my attention to this specimen. This is contribution no. 68 of the Moore Laboratory.—JOHN WILLIAM HARDY, *Moore Laboratory of Zoology, Occidental College, Los Angeles, California, October 9, 1964.*

Unusual Bathing Habits of the Turkey Vulture.—On September 12, 1964, I was hiking in Walnut Canyon National Monument, eight miles east of Flagstaff, Arizona. A flock of 14 Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*) were seen flying overhead and perching in nearby ponderosa pine approximately one-fourth mile due south of the Walnut Canyon Visitor Center. There had been numerous thunder showers throughout the afternoon and as the rain again began to fall, the vultures settled in dead snags. Soon other vultures were flying from the protection of the living trees into more open areas. Birds silhouetted against the sky were observed to spread their wings and manipulate the primary and secondary feathers allowing them to be washed by the rain. This accomplished, they ruffled their body feathers and turned into the wind, allowing the water to run off their body. The birds then shook themselves and flapped their wings. With their feathers properly arranged, they returned to the shelter of the pines and continued to preen themselves. The bathing occupied a period of about 45 minutes.—MIKE MCKELVEY, *Arizona State College, Flagstaff, Arizona, October 8, 1964.*

Northern Limit of the Acorn Woodpecker.—Gabrielson and Jewett (Birds of Oregon, 1940: 374) give Lane County as the northern limit of the Acorn Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus*) in Oregon. Walker (Condor 54, 1952:315) observed a pair on several occasions at Corvallis, and Jewett (Murrelet 33, 1954:14) reported a road-killed Acorn Woodpecker at Salem, Oregon. On three occasions, December 26, 1960, August 17, 1961, and December 29, 1963, I have noted two (presumably paired) Acorn Woodpeckers in The Dalles, Oregon, on the south bank of the Columbia River. On August 16, 1961, a single bird was seen in the same locality. This extends the northern limit of the species and is one of very few records of its occurrence east of the Cascade Mountains.

The country around The Dalles supports mixed ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) and scrub oak (*Quercus* sp.), and it is possible that a limited number of Acorn Woodpeckers could breed in the vicinity. Although this species has never been reported from Washington state, habitat similar to that at The Dalles can be found about 15 miles northwest and 30 miles northeast of The Dalles, at White Salmon and Satus Pass, Washington, respectively. A thorough search of these areas is likely to yield the first Washington record of the Acorn Woodpecker.—JARED VERNER, *Department of Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, October 6, 1964.*

Two Western Occurrences of the Orchard Oriole.—On March 25, 1964, a singing Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*), in adult male plumage, was observed foraging in citrus trees in El Centro, Imperial County, California. Several 35 mm. color photographs were made of the bird and are now on file at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California. This is apparently the fourth recorded occurrence of this species in the state and the first inland report.

On May 22, 1964, an adult male Orchard Oriole was collected near San Simon Cienaga, approximately 15 miles north of Rodeo, in Hidalgo County, New Mexico, as it foraged in the flowers of mesquite (*Prosopis juliflora*). The specimen, which had some subcutaneous fat and moderately enlarged testes (4 × 6 mm.), has been deposited in the collection of The University of Michigan Museum of Zoology. Two fall-taken specimens from the nearby Chiricahua Mountains in Arizona (Monson and Phillips, A Checklist of the Birds of Arizona, 1964:60) represent the only other substantiated records of this species in the Southwest east of California and west of southeastern New Mexico.—JOHN P. HUBBARD, *The University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan, September 17, 1964.*

Physiological Aspects of the Onset of Molt in the Redwinged Blackbird.—The onset of molt in the Redwinged Blackbird (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) was studied during June, July, and