

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

**The Distribution of Certain Mimidae in California.**—Distributional records of the birds of California have not been compiled since 1944 (Grinnell and Miller, *Pacific Coast Avifauna* No. 27, 1944), and the status of some of the less common species is now easier to determine. Some of the mimids are commoner than was formerly suspected, and range extensions of others have been discovered.

*Dumetella carolinensis*. Catbird. A single bird collected on the Farallon Islands on 4 September 1884 (Townsend, *Auk*, 2:215, 1885) appears to be the only substantiated record from California. On 10 June 1964 McCaskie and DeBenedictis observed a single bird at Oasis, Mono County, and another at Deep Springs, Inyo County. On 7 November 1964 McCaskie discovered an immature male (San Diego Natural History Museum no. 35095) at Imperial Beach, San Diego County, and collected it the following day. This species breeds in eastern Oregon, winters in southern México, and may be expected occasionally to migrate through California.

*Toxostoma rufum*. Brown Thrasher. In 1944 there were four published California records between September and April (Grinnell and Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 347). The only specimens from the state were collected in Death Valley, Inyo County, on 1 November 1959 (Wauer, *Condor*, 62:297, 1960) and at Cottonwood Springs, Riverside County, on 22 October 1945 (Russell, *Condor*, 49:131, 1947). The latter was of the western race, *longicauda*. Published sight records are: one seen in San Diego, San Diego County, between 25 November 1958 and 3 May 1959 (Morley, *Condor*, 61:374, 1959; *Audubon Field Notes*, 13:402, 1959), and five reported in *Audubon Field Notes*: one seen on Point Reyes, Marin County, on 3 September 1959 (14:69, 1960); one seen near Carmel, Monterey County, on 12 and 13 October 1963 (18:69, 1964); one at Big Sur, Monterey County, between 28 October and 16 November 1962 (17:65, 1963, photographs in the Pacific Grove Natural History Museum seen by the authors); one seen in Death Valley, Inyo County, on 21 September 1964 (19:80, 1965); and one banded at Granite Station (? = Granite Spur, Riverside County) on 15 February 1956 (10:284, 1956).

One appeared at a feeding station in San Diego, San Diego County, from about 15 October 1965 until 5 January 1966, and was seen by McCaskie during its stay. This species now appears to be a rare fall migrant and winter visitor in California.

*Toxostoma bendirei*. Bendire's Thrasher. This species breeds in small numbers on the deserts of southeastern California. One collected in Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, in early September 1912 (Miller, *Condor*, 15:41, 1913) and one seen near Imperial Beach, San Diego County, on 16 November 1962 (McCaskie and Banks, *Auk*, 81:358, 1964) have been the only published records from coastal California.

McCaskie saw a bird in badly worn plumage near Solana Beach, San Diego County, on 27 August 1964; it was along the edge of a brackish marsh. McCaskie collected an immature male (SDNHM no. 35096) in very worn plumage near Imperial Beach, San Diego County, on 2 October 1964, after S. G. Suffel had discovered it the previous day. The wandering of birds to coastal California after the breeding season is evidently more frequent than had been suspected.

*Toxostoma curvirostre*. Curve-billed Thrasher. Six winter records for the Colorado River Valley and one winter record for the Imperial Valley have been published from California (McCaskie and Prather, *Condor*, 67:443, 1965). On 6 and 19 September McCaskie and others saw one near Imperial Beach, San Diego County. This is the first record for the coast of California.

*Oreoscoptes montanus*. Sage Thrasher. This species breeds commonly in eastern California and winters sparsely in the southeastern deserts and along the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley; in the fall it has been recorded along the coast as far north as Ventura County (Grinnell and Miller, *op. cit.*, p. 346). Since then a fall sight record from near Carmel, Monterey County, has been published in *Audubon Field Notes* (16:71, 1962).

DeBenedictis and Stallcup have independently discovered this species at Point Reyes, Marin County, in the spring and fall. Stallcup saw two between 23 and 25 May 1964, and DeBenedictis saw at least three between 17 March and 5 April 1965; DeBenedictis saw single birds on 20 October 1963 and on 27 September 1964. Stallcup collected an unsexed bird (Museum of Vertebrate

Zoology no. 154279) at the Santa Rita Prison near Livermore, Alameda County, on 18 March 1964. These are the northwesternmost records of this species in California.—GUY McCASKIE, *Tahoe City, California*, RICHARD STALLCUP, *Oakland, California*, and PAUL DEBENEDICTIS, *University of Michigan Museum of Zoology, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 7 June 1966*.

**Galápagos Finches Grooming Marine Iguanas.**—A party from the National Science Foundation—University of California Galápagos Expedition spent the period from 26 January to 5 February 1964 on Punta Espinosa, Narborough (Fernandina) Island. This is a narrow point of mostly bare lava rock, although mangroves grow nearby. The Mangrove Finch (*Camarhynchus heliobates*) has been seen in these mangroves by others, but we did not succeed in finding it. The only geospizids I saw were a few individuals of the local population of the Small Ground Finch (*Geospiza fuliginosa*).

Punta Espinosa harbors perhaps the largest local concentration of marine iguanas (*Amblyrhynchus cristatus*) to be found anywhere in the Galápagos. Several of us noticed that one or two of the small finches were often to be seen hopping about not only among but also over the inactive reptiles. At first we supposed that this was fortuitous, but it soon became apparent that the finches were coming regularly to groom the iguanas. They examined the latter closely, while hopping about on their heads and bodies, and sometimes picked small objects from the rough epidermis and even from about the eyes of the reptiles.

The late A. H. Miller and his assistant Paul DeBenedictis collected one of the finches. Its gut contents were carefully extracted by Lt. Don R. Dietlein and sent to Captain Harry Hoogstraal of NAMRU, an authority on ticks. The following ticks were reported by Hoogstraal.

*Amblyomma d. darwini* or related species: large fragments of approximately 10 larvae and 24 nymphs. *Ornithoderus capensis* group: twelve larvae, four of them in good condition.

The gut contents also included parts of arthropods, perhaps beetles and centipedes, as well as a little vegetable matter and sand.

It is thus established that at Punta Espinosa, the finch *Geospiza fuliginosa* regularly grooms the marine iguanas for ticks at least at the season we were there. It is likewise known that there are other areas in the islands where the iguanas and this species of finch occur together but where such grooming behavior cannot be common or it would have been observed. Punta Espinosa is, however, a very barren place in so far as terrestrial life is concerned. The peculiar habit described above may be a local adaptation, just as is the even more remarkable habit of *Geospiza difficilis* of pecking incubating boobies (*Sula*) until it draws blood and then eating the blood, reported from isolated little Wenman Island by Bowman (The Living Bird, No. 4, 29–44, 1965).

I secured a photograph of a finch grooming an iguana that has been published on page 22 of a volume "The Galápagos" (University of California, Berkeley, 1966). Robert I. Bowman, editor of that volume, suggested that I prepare this note. Dr. Miller had planned to do so, but no manuscript could be found. Further study of this remarkable behavior is desirable. The field work was partly supported by National Science Foundation Grant GE 2370.—DEAN AMADON, *The American Museum of Natural History, New York, New York 10024, 28 June 1966*.

**Additional Observations on the Status of North American White Pelicans.**—The object of this note is to supplement the information on breeding colonies of White Pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) reported by Lies and Behle (Condor, 68:279–292, 1966). These authors concluded that White Pelicans have declined since the status report of Thompson (U.S. Dept. Int., Natl. Park Serv., Contrib. Wild Life Div., Occas. Paper No. 1, 1933) and that their status requires close attention and their colonies close protection.

*Pelican Lake, Manitoba* (52° 25' N, 100° 20' W). During our three years of observations, 1963–1965, a colony of White Pelicans nested on Pelican Lake in western Manitoba; neither Thompson (*op. cit.*, pp. 56–58) nor Lies and Behle (*op. cit.*, pp. 287–288) reported a breeding colony on this appropriately named lake. Pelicans, along with Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) and Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*), nest on three small islands near the south-