

NESTING RECORD OF EUROPEAN SKYLARK IN WASHINGTON STATE

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The Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*) was introduced to Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada, in 1903 and 1913 (Carl and Guiget, British Columbia Provincial Museum Handbook 14, 1958). Bruce (Condor 63:418, 1961) gives a sight record for the species on San Juan Island, Washington, and Larrison (Washington Birds, Seattle Audubon Society, Seattle, 1968) includes it in an undocumented "Rare and Accidental Species" list. In 1969 Leslie Hall, a student at Western Washington State College, noted the species at the south end of San Juan Island. Further investiga-

tion showed several singing birds in an area of open, grassy habitat approximately one mile long and one-third mile wide.

We searched the area, located at the monument marking the site of the American Camp during the Pig War of 1859-73, on 17 May 1970. After flushing an adult Skylark we found a nest containing three eggs, and we then followed food-carrying adults to a second nest containing four young birds a few days old. Both nests were within one-fourth mile of the monument. We estimated about 12 pairs of Skylarks in the area. Other species apparently nesting there included Savannah Sparrows (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) and Vesper Sparrows (*Poocetes gramineus*). The area is heavily populated with European Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and attracts numbers of eagles and hawks as well as foxes and other predators.

Although the species may have introduced itself on San Juan Island years ago from Vancouver Island (about 15 miles away), as far as we can ascertain, this record is the first proof of its nesting in the state of Washington, and the only current record for the continental United States.

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OCCURRENCE OF THE XANTUS' MURRELET OFF THE OREGON COAST

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On 19 November 1969 at 01:00 the Oregon State University oceanography vessel, *RV Yaquina*, was 65 mi. W of Newport, Oregon (44° 39' N, 125° 36' W). A pair of small alcids appeared in the ship's stern lights diving back and forth behind the ship. They appeared to be feeding. The water was very clear and their zigzag swimming movements below the surface were evident. One of the pair was captured in a dip net as it surfaced from a dive. The bird was identified as a Xantus' Murrelet, *Endomychura hypoleuca*. The underwings were white, distinguishing it from the very similar *E. craveri*. The bird was photographed and, when released, flew off outside the range of the lights. The surface water temperature was 14°C. It is interesting that at the time this bird was captured, saury, a food fish of the tuna, were also dip netted.

On 28 July 1970 at 22:00, 115 mi. W of Cape Falcon, Oregon (45° 49.3' N, 126° 50.5' W), an immature male *E. hypoleuca* flew onto the deck of the *RV Cayuse*. A midwater trawl was being conducted

and the deck lights were on. The sea surface temperature was 15.8°C. Although no saury (*Cololabis saira*) were seen under the night light when this specimen was found, albacore (*Thunnus alalunga*) had been caught in the immediate vicinity during daylight hours. Measurements taken on this bird were: left testes, 5.0 × 2.5 mm; right testes, 2.75 × 1.5 mm; skull ¼ ossified. This bird is in the Natural History Museum, Department of Zoology, Oregon State University (O.S.U. No. 10,017).

An additional sighting of *E. hypoleuca* was made 132 mi. W of Cape Falcon, Oregon (45° 40' N, 127° 06' W) on the morning of 1 September 1970. A pair of this species was seen on the water's surface within 5 ft of each other. The oceanographic conditions at the time of this observation were similar to those recorded when the other *E. hypoleuca* were seen. The surface water temperature was 16.2°C at a station 11 mi. E of the birds' position. Although no saury were seen in the immediate area, albacore were caught within three miles on jig lines from the *RV Cayuse*.

The only previous record north of California of *E. hypoleuca* was a pair collected in an area of comparable oceanographic conditions on 7 August 1947 off southern Washington by P. W. Martin (Murrelet 35:50). He sighted several pairs of *E. hypoleuca* in 60°F water while fishing for albacore tuna. Xantus' Murrelets could occur closer to the beach than these records indicate. The warm water frequented by albacore tuna and saury is usually more than 20 miles off the coast but is occasionally found closer to the beach, especially during the late summer and early fall. The lack of previous records for this species off the Oregon coast is probably due to the scarcity of competent observers offshore in this area. Additional work in the offshore waters of Oregon and Washington will surely result in additional sightings of southern bird species.

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