

Alaska Range. It may well prove to be resident in suitable habitat in the eastern Wrangell Mountains, or possibly the birds seen at Rock Lake were wanderers from a breeding area across the nearby Canadian border.

*Lanius excubitor*. Northern Shrike. A pair with two young was seen at 4100 ft on the south side of Rock Lake on 7 July.

*Euphagus carolinus*. Rusty Blackbird. A male seen at Rock Lake early in July was accompanied by a juvenile on 7 July.

*Calcarius pictus*. Smith's Longspur. Seven breeding

pairs were located on two different plateaus at 5000 ft and 5075 ft, respectively, to the north and south of Rock Lake during the first 2 weeks of July.

The Rock Lake localities are some 520 miles southeast and 400 miles south-southeast of the nearest other reported nesting sites of this species in Alaska, which are in the Brooks Range, although it has been observed between the Tanana and Yukon rivers (Irving, U.S. Natl. Mus. Bull. 217:125, 1960; Kessel and Schaller, Biol. Papers Univ. Alaska No. 4, 1960).

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## SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN A MIXED WATERFOWL ASSEMBLY

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Feeding relationships between Snowy Egrets (*Egretta thula*) and Red-breasted Mergansers (*Mergus serrator*), often involving other waterbirds as well, have been the subject of published comment on several recent occasions. Christman (Condor 59:343, 1957) described an occurrence in San Diego County, California. Parks and Bressler (Auk 80:198, 1963) and Emlen and Ambrose (Auk 87:164, 1970) were concerned with similar feeding movements in Florida, the former also citing an instance involving Hooded Mergansers (*Lophodytes cucullatus*).

Another, but more complex, example was observed early in the morning on 2 December 1972 at Bahía de la Concepción (ca. 26°38' N, 111°50' W) on the Gulf of California in central Baja California. The principal element consisted of about 40 Red-breasted Mergansers which were swimming together, with their heads often below the water, parallel to the rocky shoreline and ranging from 10 to 30 ft from the shore. Moving along the shore abreast of the ducks were 7 Snowy Egrets, a Reddish Egret (*Dichromanassa rufescens*), 18 Heermann's Gulls (*Larus heermanni*), and 3 Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*). This assemblage was gradually augmented by another Reddish Egret, two Brown Pelicans (*Pelecanus*

*occidentalis*) and a Double-crested Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*). The pelicans and cormorant stayed on the open-water side of the ducks.

When the mergansers found fish and commenced diving, the whole scene became one of frenzied activity. As the fish sought to escape, some fled toward the shore, and the herons moved into shallow water and darted about, snatching them up. The pelicans and cormorant fed on fish which moved toward deeper water. The Heermann's Gulls showed an interest in the mergansers but did not obtain any food from them; they did successfully harass the pelicans, and both they and the Ring-billed Gulls robbed the Snowy Egrets. Both species of gulls also waded in to get food from the shallow water, perhaps bits of fish. It was not possible to examine any of the fish but they appeared to be small, about 3 inches in length.

After a few minutes, the school of fish was dissipated or moved to deeper water. The procession then moved on. Three such scenes of activity involving the same group of birds were observed in the 40 min of observation.

Parks and Bressler (1963) commented that published accounts of joint feeding activities of different species of piscivorous birds are uncommon. Evidently, the relationship between mergansers and the Snowy Egret is widespread. However, it can operate only when mergansers are feeding close enough to shore and cannot reach maximum efficiency unless the movement is parallel to the shoreline.

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## DISCOVERY OF A GOLDEN EAGLE NEST ON THE ALASKA PENINSULA

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On 10 July 1973 a Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) nest was found atop Mt. Simeon located 5 miles W of Cold Bay (162°43' W, 55°12' N), near the tip of the Alaska Peninsula. The nest contained two downy young (fig. 1) along with the remains of a duck and two ground squirrels (*Citellus parryi*). The nest, built mainly of alder (*Alnus crispa*) sticks, was located on a west-facing andesite bluff at approximately 1000 ft elevation. I observed both adults come to the nest a few seconds apart with ground squirrels. The eaglets appeared about 5-6 weeks old (Gabrielson and Lincoln, Birds of Alaska, Wildl. Mgmt. Inst., Washington, D.C., 1959). Pinfeathers on their necks and backs were just beginning to protrude through their white down.

The nest was visited again on 12 July; both eaglets



FIGURE 1. Eaglets at about 5 weeks of age near Cold Bay, Alaska. This is the westernmost known nesting record of Golden Eagles in North America.



FIGURE 2. Nearly fledged Golden Eaglets on 30 July.

periodically exercised their wings. Neither adult was seen. Subsequent visits and photographs were made on 29 and 30 July when the eaglets were nearly fully feathered (fig. 2). One adult appeared with a ground squirrel on the latter date, and an adult was at the nest when I arrived on 9 August. On this day both eaglets were fully feathered, and one bird was perched on a ledge several feet below the nest. Both young frequently exercised their wings. The last visit to the nest was on 15 August; only one eaglet remained on a nearby ledge.

No nesting records exist for the Golden Eagle on the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands (Gabrielson and Lincoln, 1959). Moreover, this species was not

previously recorded on the Izembek National Wildlife Range (Birds of the Izembek National Wildlife Range, Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, Portland, 1973). The nearest specimen was collected at Unga Island in the Shumagin Islands, 80 miles E of Cold Bay (Dall, Calif. Acad. Sci. Proc. 5:25, 1873). The most recent sight record was 200 miles to the west on Unalaska Island (Cahn, Condor 49:78, 1947).

Although rare in the Aleutians and Alaska Peninsula, the Golden Eagle may be more widespread than believed in this remote region where Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) are common.

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### FIRST RECORDED BREEDING OF THE GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE IN COLORADO

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Great-tailed Grackles (*Cassidix mexicanus* ssp.) (Gmelin) have been expanding their breeding ranges northward during this century. *C. m. prosopidicola* has followed the Blackland Prairie of central and northern Texas northward, reaching Alva, Oklahoma by 1953 (Selander and Giller 1961), while *C. m. nelsoni* has moved northward from Sonora, México into south-central Arizona at least as far as Phoenix (Phillips et al. 1964). A third expansion movement northward from Chihuahua, México into New Mexico, west Texas, and eastern Arizona has also occurred, the individuals involved belonging to the subspecies *C. m. monsoni* (Phillips 1950).

In New Mexico, *C. m. monsoni* is distributed rather widely across the southern section of the state but becomes more restricted to the valley of the Rio

Grande north of Las Cruces. It occurs casually as far north as Espanola in the Rio Grande valley, and is also occasional in Farmington and Aztec in the northwest portion of the state (Hubbard 1970). Sometime between 1965 and 1970, the Great-tailed Grackle continued its movement northward into Colorado. It was not recorded prior to 1965 by Bailey and Niedrach (1965), but in 1970 a male was observed at Gunnison, Gunnison County. Since then, solitary males have been noted at Gunnison and several were seen at Durango, La Plata County in 1972 (Kingery 1972). In 1973 a male and a female returned to Gunnison but apparently did not nest (Kingery 1973). On 27 April 1973 the author observed a single male Great-tailed Grackle at Monte Vista, Rio Grande County in the San Luis Valley of Colorado. Subsequent observations revealed the presence of eight nests of this species.

The male seen on 27 April was sitting on the bridge over the Empire Canal, immediately northeast of the State Veterans Home at Monte Vista. What was presumably the same bird was seen again the following morning as it foraged along the shore of nearby Home Lake. Although periodic checks were made of the area in the next few days, the bird was not relocated.

On 9 May the area was visited again and three males