

GENERAL NOTES

Burrowing Owl at sea.—On November 11, 1943, at 1:30 p.m., while aboard U.S. Destroyer "C. K. Bronson" en route with two other naval vessels from the Canal Zone to San Francisco, California, I observed with 7x binoculars a Burrowing Owl (*Speotyto cunicularia*). The ships were off the mouth of the Gulf of California in latitude 20° 30' N, longitude 109° 20' W, and moving at a speed of 18 knots. From the wing of the destroyer bridge, I watched the bird at intervals during a 2-hour period as it flew to one ship, rested a while, then flew to another in our formation.

It alighted several times aboard our vessel, on whaleboat davits or on gun mounts. In both locations the owl was in full view and within 15 feet of many observers on the bridge and deck areas. Neither fright nor weakness from extensive flight was apparent from the bird's actions. After a minute or two it would fly off, moving rapidly low over the water, toward one of the other two ships 3,500 yards distant, where it would land.

The sea was calm, with no unusual wind or weather disturbances in the vicinity. The nearest points of land were Cape San Lucas, Lower California (130 miles); Cape Corrientes, Mexico (185 miles); and Revilla Gigedo Islands (125 miles).

A bird in such a position at sea could well be migrating from Lower California to the Mexican Provinces southward. The Florida Burrowing Owl has been reported in localities that seemed to indicate extensive migrations over water (Barbour 1943, "Cuban Ornithology," pp. 80-81), but there is apparently no previously recorded observation of Burrowing Owls over oceanic waters at any great distance from land.—ROBERT L. PATTERSON, *University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*.

Late nesting of Barn Swallow in Saskatchewan.—On September 26, 1945, Fred G. Bard showed me a nest of a Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica erythrogaster*) in a shed on the outskirts of Regina, Saskatchewan. The nest contained one dead young bird which—judging by its large size and well-developed plumage—must have been nearly ready to leave the nest. No adults were observed in the vicinity.

Bard told me that when he visited this nest on September 24 it contained two young birds, alive and seemingly in normal condition. He saw no adults. For a week previous to his visit, night temperatures at Regina averaged as low as 30° F. On the night following his visit, the minimum temperature was 22° F. It seems logical to suppose that, because of the low night temperatures and the resulting curtailment of insect food, the parent birds had deserted the nest and young to undertake southward migration.—OLIN SEWALL PETTINGILL, JR., *Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota*.

Returns of winter-resident Mockingbirds in Arkansas.—In nine years of banding at my home in North Little Rock, Arkansas, 13 banded Eastern Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos polyglottos*) have held two winter territories, one at the east of the house, the other at the north. Of these 13 individuals, one returned to the same territory for a sixth winter, one for a third, and two for a second. A fifth individual that returned to the area for a second winter held, not the same territory, but one 150 yards away.

The bird that returned for a sixth winter (37-220602) was a female that held the east territory in 1936-37. From her plumage, which had been damaged in an ice storm, she was known at sight even before she was caught at the start of my banding in February 1937. Each year, until the fall of 1942, she returned about

the middle of October and left between March 15 and March 23 of the following spring. The winter of 1938-39, however, she was apparently unable to hold her territory; she returned in October 1938 but disappeared early in November, a new male (banded November 17) then occupying the territory. She was presumed dead but returned the following year, 1939, and again in 1940 and 1941. She was trapped each season but was also known at sight since she was banded on the left tarsus and all the other Mockingbirds were banded on the right. She was last seen on March 23, 1942.

The Mockingbird that returned for a third winter was a male (39-209852), banded October 30, 1939, that held the north territory that winter and all of the next winter, 1940-41. He returned again on or before October 10, 1941 (when he was retrapped), and was caught on December 11 by a hawk that was not positively identified.

When the six-winter resident of the east territory failed to return in the fall of 1942, a Mockingbird (40-270849) that had been trapped as a juvenile, on August 28 of the same year, held the east territory, staying until the middle of March 1943. In 1943-44, there was no resident in this territory; up to December 16 it was held by the owner of the north territory, but on that day a new Mockingbird arrived and succeeded in taking it. The bird was banded on the same day but was such a nuisance chasing Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis sialis*) that it was captured three days later and released eight miles away across the Arkansas River. On January 19, a new Mockingbird claimed the east territory, was banded with both aluminum (39-218021) and colored bands, and remained until April 4. He was retrapped on December 2, 1945, having returned and settled in the east territory on October 17, although not then positively identified because he had lost his colored band.

The other Mockingbird that returned for a second winter (a female, No. 40-270871) was one of the two breeding birds of the territories that have stayed for the winter in the nine years of banding. She and her mate (40-270877) nested in the north territory in the summer of 1943, and though they were not seen together the following winter, each was caught several times in the territory. There was no record for either in the summer of 1944, but early in October the female returned to winter here, and on being trapped was given a colored band in addition to her metal band. She disappeared December 31 and is believed to have been killed by the Screech Owl (*Otus asio*) that spent its days in a woodpecker's box in the territory. Mockingbird feathers were found in the box. On January 2, 1945, a Mockingbird, not banded but known by a smudge of coal on its cheek, moved in from the territory north of our north territory.

The fifth bird that returned was a male (37-218158) that owned the north territory in 1936-37. The following winter another Mockingbird held this territory, and the former owner was trapped December 14, 1937, in the territory at the foot of the hill on which our house is located.

While 5 of the 13 banded winter residents returned, there were 8 for which there were no later records. There were 4 cases of a Mockingbird coming into a territory on the death or disappearance of the first owner, indicating that there is some winter movement, although, as in the case of the bird with the coal smudge, the moves may have been from next-door or other near-by territories.—RUTH HARRIS THOMAS, *Route 3, North Little Rock, Arkansas.*