

The Wilson Plover in California.—Mr. A. M. Ingersoll of San Diego has recently sent me a specimen of *Ægialitis wilsonia* taken by him at Pacific Beach, San Diego County, June 29, 1894. The circumstances of its capture were given by Mr. Ingersoll in a brief but interesting article in the 'Nidiologist,' Vol. II, Feb., 1895, p. 87. The skin, now before me, is that of a male in worn nuptial plumage. The dorsal surface is particularly worn and faded, the tertials and wing-coverts presenting a truly thread-bare appearance. The measurements are: wing, 108mm.; tail, 48; culmen, 21.5; tarsus, 29.5; middle toe with claw, 23. As far as I know, this specimen furnishes the only record of *Ægialitis wilsonia* for California.—JOSEPH GRINNELL, *Palo Alto, Cali.*

The Yellow Rail (*Porzana noveboracensis*) in Wisconsin.—Between October 6 and 13, 1901, four Yellow Rails were seen on different marshes near Delavan, Wis., and one specimen was taken October 11. This bird was captured by a pointer and brought to me alive by the dog's owner. It proved to be a male and is an exceptionally beautiful individual. On October 13 I flushed one myself at my feet and carefully marked it down on the scantily grassed, dry marsh not four rods away, but the efforts of two men and two very good bird dogs were insufficient to start it again by the time the shells were changed in my gun, although it was not over a minute before we were hunting him and worked diligently for nearly an hour.—N. HOLLISTER, *Delavan, Wis.*

An Abnormal Specimen of the Bob-white (*Colinus virginianus*).—I shot near Mount Pleasant, S. C., on February 4, 1902, an adult male Bob-white which has nearly the whole throat ochraceous-buff encircled with white. Among the thousands of these birds I have killed, this specimen is the first I have ever seen marked in this manner.—ARTHUR T. WAYNE, *Mount Pleasant, S. C.*

Buteo solitarius off the Coast of Hawaii.—My friend Mr. W. K. Andrews was a recent passenger on a sailing ship from San Francisco to Hilo, and he reports the following interesting occurrence. When 400 miles off the southern point of Hawaii, a hawk boarded the ship, and perched on the top of the mizzen-mast. In a few moments it flew away, and presently returned with a bird in its claws. Mr. Andrews is well acquainted with the Hawaiian Hawk, but wishing to make sure of the identity of this particular individual, he shot the bird. Unfortunately it fell dead just over the side of the ship allowing, however, a good glimpse ere it was swept astern.

Mr. Andrews considers his identification of the hawk certain, and is pretty confident that the hawk's quarry was a plover, it being in plain sight on the water as it drifted past.

Readers of 'The Auk' may remember the report of a somewhat similar case made by the writer in this Journal for April, 1891. That particular

hawk boarded an outward bound ship, and kept with it till the California coast was sighted when it flew to land. During the voyage it lived on small birds which it left the ship to catch.

Can it be that the Hawaiian Hawk has learned of the spring and fall flights of plover, akekeke and other birds that migrate to and from the islands, and that it deliberately makes excursions to sea to capture them? Or are these two cases merely coincidences?

The writer has studied the flight of the Hawaiian Hawk on many occasions, and he does not for one moment believe in its ability to capture flying quarry. If the bird the hawk was eating when shot was actually a plover it must have been seized when on the water — evidence, so far as it goes, tending to prove that the plover sometimes rests on the ocean in its passages between the American and the Hawaiian coasts.

That the ducks occasionally rest on the ocean in their migrations, Mr. Andrews is able to state positively, as he saw a pair settle contentedly on the ocean a thousand miles from land as if for a long rest. — H. W. HENSHAW, *Hilo, Hawaii*.

Unusual Nesting Date of the Barn Owl (*Strix pratincola*). — During the fall and early winter of 1900 several Barn Owls established a residence in two or three large red oaks in our back yard. These trees were peculiarly fitted for such birds, as the ravages of time and the elements had produced several very large cavities in each tree. I had watched the birds, as best I could, with much interest. They were active only after nightfall. I expected to find a set of eggs in February. The nights were made hideous with their stentorian notes and I began to regard them as something of a nuisance but bore in mind the probability of a set of eggs entirely new to my collection, so I suffered the birds to remain unmolested. We have a number of domestic pigeons and their houses stood very close to the trees mentioned, but experience had shown the owls to be perfectly harmless and I had nothing to fear from this source. However, a pair of pigeons had nested for some months in a large cavity in one of the trees, from which they were driven by a pair of owls. This circumstance led me to look with more confident hope for a set in February. But my hopes were blasted. So I then thought it necessary to remove the trees; their dying condition demanded this course. They were cut on the 10th day of December, 1900, and on the 12th the woodmen while cutting the trees into sections found five eggs in the cavity heretofore referred to as the erst-while home of the pair of pigeons. Three of the eggs were irremediably cracked, the others badly so. They must have totally perished but for the mass of decayed vegetation, the accumulation of years, in the bottom of the hollow. This cavity was upwards of eighteen feet from the ground, about two feet in circumference, with a depth of three feet, and was on the north side of the tree, which stood directly south of the back porch and not more than thirty feet therefrom. One egg was fresh, two were infertile, and two were slightly incubated. I