

the fine luster of the adult bird. The tail feathers were pulled out in the pocket of Varney's hunting coat, but I got them and have them now, with the skin of the bird, which I secured.' The bird was shot between September 9 and 15, 1899.—A. W. SCHORGER, 168 N. Prospect Ave., Madison, Wisconsin.

A diurnal Horned-Owl courtship.—For several years I have been interested in a Pacific Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus pacificus*) which I have seen at least once each month of the year, in the small canyon back of my home on the outskirts of the city of Pomona, California. Until recently I had never seen but one and while I had, of course, no means of knowing that I was always seeing the same bird, its fearlessness and activity in daylight seemed unusual enough to warrant my thinking it was always the same owl. Once in the late afternoon, it sat on a limb facing me, not more than fifteen feet away. The limb was bare, and the owl sat motionless in the center of it, instead of being perched near the trunk, and we watched each other for three or four minutes. Not until I made a quick motion with my hand and arm toward the bird did it fly away. Several mornings I have seen the owl in broad daylight perched in the live oaks in plain sight, and it has never shown any interest or concern in me, although it watched with keen interest my two dogs.

On January 15 of this year, for the first time I saw *two* owls, which were calling to each other, one using a much deeper tone than the other. Since that date, we have heard the four-note cry from these birds nightly. At 5.30 in the morning, one of them flies very close to the house, and gives its call repeatedly. On February 17 at ten o'clock on the morning of a beautiful, clear day, I heard hooting in the canyon, and went down to investigate. There, to my surprise, I saw the two owls perched on a live oak, about thirty feet from the path. One bird, which I assumed to be the male, was facing me, and was on a fairly high limb. The other, with its back to me, was perched on a lower limb, facing the male. The latter was hooting, a call of five parts—*whó, hoo-hoo, hoo hoo*—at intervals of about one minute. At each call the female would raise her ear-tufts, and, occasionally in response, would utter an indescribable, short cry—perhaps like the cat-call of a Catbird. Otherwise she sat motionless. This performance continued for fifteen minutes, and I was interested to note that the small birds in the vicinity seemed entirely uninterested in the owls, a Kinglet approaching the male within a few feet, and a pair of Hutton's Vireos continuing their search for food in complete indifference to the presence of the predators. Suddenly the male began to utter his notes in rapid succession, with no pause between, and the female's ears were kept very busy! Then, with a quick movement he flew at her. She flew up with a snarling note, they fought for a second, then both flew off and out of my vision. I can find no account of a daylight courtship of these birds, and wonder if it is an unusual event.—ETHEL CAPEN AYER, 1300 Hillcrest Drive, Pomona, California.

Burrowing Owl in the Florida Keys.—Having to be in Florida a great deal throughout the year in connection with field work, the writer has encountered from time to time, items of interest which apparently are not listed in the literature. Illustrative of this was his recent observation of the occurrence of the Burrowing Owl in the Florida Keys. At this writing it is not certain whether these birds should be referred to *Speotyto cunicularia floridana* or *S. c. hypugaea*.

Arthur H. Howell in his 'Florida Bird Life,' does not include the Keys in the range of *floridana* in that State. The nearest locality listed is Flamingo, which lies to the eastward of East Cape (Sable) and is on the tip of the peninsula. Even that was far out of the usual range, which is the general area of the Kissimmee Prairie, though the

bird is known to breed about the Miami area, where the writer has seen burrows at Hialeah and Opalocka. The geology of the Keys is anything but indicative of being good range for the Burrowing Owl, as it is almost entirely rock, with little soil anywhere. However, there are sandy patches on some of the Keys, notably Key Vaca and the vicinity of Marathon on that key. The A. O. U. 'Check-list' excludes the Keys from the range, but points out that allied races occur in the Bahamas, Haiti and other West Indian islands. *S. c. hypugaea* is said to winter "south to Panama." Thus, one is bound to consider the possibility that this bird may wander eastward to the Keys in winter. The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (*Muscivora forficata*) certainly does so fairly regularly, even more so perhaps than one is led to believe from the literature. The writer found this species almost common in the Keys on the same trip in which the Burrowing Owls were observed. If the flycatcher comes to the Keys, the owl could do the same thing; there is more likelihood of that taking place than that the Bahaman birds come over.

At any rate, the occurrence seems to be something entirely overlooked heretofore. None of the observers who are familiar with Florida to whom the writer has appealed for information, has seen them in the Keys. None of the residents of the Keys seemed to know what was meant when asked about "ground owls." Natives of Tavernier, Matecumbe and Marathon were unfamiliar with them. The writer has spent a good deal of time in the Keys during the past three years but has not observed the birds hitherto and might not have seen them at all had it not been for the necessity of a night run from Tavernier to Marathon, a distance of some 48 miles. On the night of January 12, 1937, in company with Robert P. Allen of the Audubon Association's New York office, the round trip of 96 miles was made between 8.30 p. m. and midnight. The birds were flushed from the sides of the road and flew away in the beam of the car's headlights. The first three or four were not identified positively, for the appearance was very strange. A distinct impression of paleness was given, together with a sort of gangling posture in flight that was very peculiar. However, at about the fifth bird, one was seen in the middle of the road and the car slowed down and kept at very slow speed until the bird was within fifteen or twenty feet when every detail was apparent in the brilliant beam. That it was a Burrowing Owl was as plain as anything could well be. When it finally flushed, its appearance was identical with the others than had been seen earlier. After this, two others were seen, making a total of seven birds. One was seen in a small bush by the roadside and its eyes reflected the headlight beam beautifully. The localities were Lower Matecumbe Key, Long Key, Grassy Key and Key Vaca. The Over-seas Highway now travels causeways and bridges as far as Marathon without the necessity of a ferry, so it was possible to cover all these keys by car.

It is clear that some collecting should be done to establish definitely the identity of these Key Owls. It is probable that their occurrence has taken place for some time, and that they are almost entirely nocturnal which would account for the natives, being unfamiliar with them.—ALEXANDER SPRUNT, JR., *National Assoc. Audubon Soc.*, Charleston, South Carolina.

Great Gray Owl in Connecticut.—On January 12, 1938, a large owl was discovered in a bare tree in the residential section of Hartford, though close to the business zone on a busy avenue where hundreds were passing during the noon hour. Just as soon as notified, I searched for and found this owl, and then studied it very carefully with a six-power binocular in five different locations covering perhaps half a mile in distance, and each time the bird was in a bare tree and up about forty