

Echoes from the Field.

Notes from Alameda, Cal. Townsend's Warbler has been seen by me but once here, in winter.

Oct. 26.—Audubon's Warbler has not occurred commonly this fall. Five birds in a flock were noted near San Lorenzo, Alameda Co., on Sept. 21. Very few noted here this fall and rarely seen in spring migrations in the high plumage.

Noted a Yellow Warbler, Oct. 25.

Very few pairs of Lutescent Warbler; a few years ago a tolerably common breeder. Are annually noted in many of the primeval copes about town, and I doubt if any now remain through their nesting period.

In Contra Costa Co., March, 1899, took a nest and set of Hutton's Vireo in a scrub oak heavily draped with moss, which was also the principal composition of the nest. The notes of one of the birds caused me to stop my team and it took but a few seconds to detect the nest, on a side hill a few yards off the road. The horizontal limb, near the end of which hung the nest, was too light for my weight, so it had to be hacked off with a hatchet, no saw being handy. During the performance the limb tipped considerably, but the incubating bird remained on the nest until I began to haul in the limb. This trait is common with the Warbling Vireo and occasionally with Anna's Hummingbird, the Rufous and the Allen's being very wild in proportion.

Oct. 13. Heard what seemed to be a Western Meadow Lark twittering, and it also sounded like the Olive-sided Flycatcher. Upon approaching an apple tree I detected a California Shrike singing. The notes were low and very sweet and sung several times. At my advance from my position of observation, the Shrike uttered its characteristic, harsh cry and flew, being immediately pursued and attacked by a hummingbird, which appeared to cause little if any annoyance, across a field to a tree 100 yards distant. The hummingbird diverted its course as the shrike was about to alight.

Noted two Tree Swallows skimming over a meadow about Jan. 1. Having seen occasional birds in winter and a large bunch at Niles in January, 1898. Would indicate this swallow to winter in limited numbers in the county.

The migration of Louisiana Tanagers was very light this spring. In the fall they are a scarcer migrant, a few seen almost annually, in sombre plumage.

An instance of three nests of four eggs each of Lazuli Bunting, all situated in bushes on the high bank of a creek in the foothills, all about three and a half feet from the ground and within a few yards of each other, were reported by an acquaintance last spring. Each nest held some pipped eggs.

The following curious nesting is reported by the same party:—a set of Plain Titmouse and Ash-throated Flycatcher were taken at successive intervals in 1896 from one hollow, ten feet up in a live-oak on a side-hill. The site was not visited in 1897. The remarks for 1896 apply to 1898. In 1899 the Plain Titmouse was robbed of a set of six eggs on April 15, in a hollow near by. On May 1 and 19, two of her sets were taken from the original hollow which contained a set of Red-shafted Flicker on June 8. On the same date, in a flicker's excavation, five feet from the ground in a dead oak stump ten feet high, standing on a side hill, a California Screech Owl was incubating one of her own and one Red-shafted Flicker's egg. A visit to the nest one week later disclosed the same state of affairs.

On April 29, I discovered a nest almost completed of Black-headed Grosbeak in an apple tree from which I took four fresh eggs on May 9. I made written memoranda of the number of the tree and the row in the orchard and on July 17 was surprised to find a nest and three eggs in the same crotch and am inclined to believe it was the third nest of the two pairs that bred in the orchard.

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