

with a ridge or rim next to the entrance tube or neck, to prevent the eggs rolling out. In the winter nest there is merely a slight depression, little more than a shelf on which to rest. The one instance which leads me to think the young are sometimes raised in the winter nest is as follows:

In the early part of March, 1899, — the 7th I believe—I found a male winter nest and about twenty feet from it what I supposed to be a female winter nest, both in the woolly yerba santa or *Eriodictyon tomentosum*. A few weeks later, about April 15, I examined the nests and found four fresh eggs in the female's nest. That evening after dark I returned to the nests and captured both male and female in their nests. I took them to my camp and in the morning the female had added another egg thus completing the set for me, for which I rewarded her with liberty.

Looking over my notes I find most of the verdin entries date from March 20 to May 2, most of the fresh eggs being found the last week in March, though I have found fresh eggs on March 10. The number in a set is four or five about evenly divided a to frequency. This season I have found three complete sets of four each and two of five. Most frequently the nests are found in mesquite trees and the smoke tree or *Dalea spinosa*, Daley's thorn tree. But any spiny shrub will answer, as I have found nests in the screw-bean, cholla cactus, desert willow, tree-sage, catclaw, *Eriodictyon*, and last month I found one in a grapevine growing up in a cottonwood tree. The nests will average about five feet from the ground though I have found them as low as 2½ feet and as high as ten or twelve feet.

The bird is easily flushed from the

nest and can be heard chipping in the nearby brush but takes care not to approach the intruder. But there are exceptions; as this season a pair of them came only four feet from me and scolded while I examined their nest of fresh eggs. Infertile eggs are often found especially toward the end of the breeding season, and in most of the sets of five eggs one is infertile. I do not think I ever found five young in the nest though often four and one rotten egg. The eggs resemble those of the gnatcatcher, pale green with brownish spots on them, but are a little smaller and the markings paler and often coarser, approaching blotches.

Last December I found two female winter nests and later saw several of both sexes. One of them in a mesquite tree was ten or twelve feet from the ground and measured more than eight inches long by seven wide and seven deep. Lining was about one and one-quarter inches thick and composed of feathers—quail, chicken and others. The cavity was spherical, about one and one-half inches in diameter. The exterior was of mesquite and other thorny twigs, grass and weed stems, fine leaves, and any woolly or sticky fibre or weed that would hang together and help bind the nest.

The birds seem almost independent of water as I have found nests and young about five miles from water and have seen old nests at least ten miles from any known water. The problem I am now at work on is that of the use of winter nests for breeding and if a number of nests can be located and marked next fall and winter and examined in the spring the question can be settled. Perhaps some of THE CONDOR readers can answer from personal experience or some other knowledge.

The Southern White-headed Woodpecker.

BY JOSEPH GRINNELL.

Xenopicus gravirostris, new species.

SPEC. CHAR.—Similar to *Xenopicus albolarvatus* but bill much heavier, and size in general

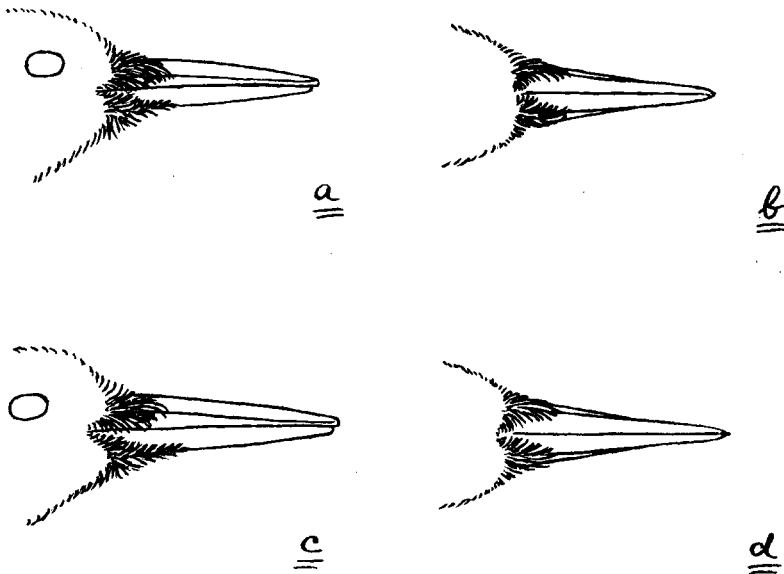
TYPE—♂ ad., No. 2926 Coll. J. G.; Camp Chileo, Sierra San Gabriel, Los Angeles County, California; July 6, 1897, collected by J. Grinnell.

RANGE—The Southern Sierras of California (Transition and lower Boreal Zones) from the Tejon Mountains (probably,) south to the Cuyamaca Mountains.

REMARKS—The differences between *X. albolarvatus* and *X. gravirostris* are slight, and apparently exist only in dimensions, chiefly those of the bill, as shown in the accompanying drawings. The relative extent of white and black areas in the two forms seems to be identical. The size of the bill in the two cases is remarkably constant, but in two instances at hand individual variation brings an overlapping of characters. In a specimen from Red Point, Placer County, the bill is as long as the average from the San Bernardino Mountains, but at the same time it is slenderer so that the total bulk is conspicuously less. The bird from the San Bernardino Mountains with the shortest bill is in this dimension equal to the average of *albolarvatus*, but the thickness is much greater than in any of the latter. The drawings are from selected average examples, not extremes. The material at hand does not justify subspecific treatment of these two forms. Geographical continuity of ranges possibly exists; but it seems quite as likely that there is a broad hiatus in the vicinity of Tehachapi Pass, whence I can find no record of the white-headed woodpecker. The following adult specimens from California have been examined:

X. albolarvatus—Kernville 4 (probably neighboring mountains); Big Trees, Calaveras Co., 2; Cisco, Placer Co. 2; Snow Mt., Colusa Co. 2; Echo, El Dorado Co. 4; Eagle Lake, Lassen Co. 5; Lights Canyon, Plumas Co. 1; Red Point, Placer Co. 3; Horse Creek, Siskiyou Mts. 3.—Total, 26.

X. gravirostris—San Bernardino Mts., San Bernardino Co. 13; San Gabriel Mts., Los Angeles Co. 3.—Total 16.



Figs. A and B—*X. albolarvatus*, ♂, No. 5108 Coll. J. G., Horse Creek, Siskiyou Mts.
 Figs. C and D—*X. gravirostris*, ♂, Type, No. 2926 Coll. J. G., Sierra San Gabriel, Los Angeles Co.