

The Summer Birds of Washoe Lake, Nevada.

BY FORREST S. HANFORD.

WASHOE Lake, Washoe Co., Nevada, is a typical Nevadan lake, with an area of eighteen square miles and an altitude of 5,045 feet above sea level. Its shores are barren of anything approaching trees, except for a few clumps of willows here and there. Extending along the eastern shore lie a chain of sand dunes rising to a height of thirty feet, and cut through in many places by numerous 'wash-outs.'

Here in the cliffs the bank swallows make their homes, and I have found many relics and arrowheads of the Washoe tribe of Indians who once made these small, wind-sheltered gullies their home. About half a mile back of these sand hills is the Washoe range of mountains, covered only with sage brush, the first of the desert ranges.

Passing around to the west side of the lake we find a country entirely different; here lies the fertile Washoe valley and two miles distant rise the Sierra Nevada, its pine forests and snow-capped peaks making a strong contrast to the desert country to the east. The tule fields are at the north and extend four miles, ending in Little Washoe Lake. The following short notes were taken during the months of May and June of the last two years.

Æchmophorus occidentalis. Western Grebe. About ten noted in May, 1900. I have tried shooting at them with a rifle but always with the result of seeing them disappear under the water at the flash of the gun.

Colymbus nigricollis californicus. American Eared Grebe. A set of nine eggs collected in June constitutes the first record of this grebe breeding at the lake.

Larus californicus. California Gull. One seen on shore with white pelicans.

Hydrochelidon nigra surinamensis. Black Tern. Not uncommon. Several pairs noted flying over tules where they probably breed.

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos. American White Pelican. About 50 pelicans were observed at the lake last year and the number had increased to 100 this year. Three eggs were found a foot under water in June, but no nests have been found for a number of years.

Anas boschas. Mallard. Breeds abundantly at the lake in May.

Chaulelasmus strepera. Galwall. Not common. Only a few pairs noted this year.

Nettion carolinensis. Green-winged Teal.

Querquedula discors. Blue-winged Teal.

Querquedula cyanoptera. Cinnamon Teal. All three of the above ducks were common breeders at the lake.

Dafila acuta. Pintail. Mr. J. Steinmetz tells me that the pintail has been observed at the lake several times.

Histrionicus histrionicus. Harlequin Duck. A male was taken at Frankstown near the lake and identified by Mr. Steinmetz.

Erismatura jamaicensis. Ruddy Duck. Noted quite a number of times in open lanes of water in tule fields, but appeared quite shy.

Branta canadensis. Canada Goose. A number of nests of this goose have been found at the lake in past years. In May 1900 a nest was discovered near the shore, containing the shells of eggs and was supposed to belong to this species.

Branta nigricans. Black Brant. Accidental. Early in May a pair was observed near shore of lake.

Botaurus lentiginosis. American Bittern. A single bittern was seen at the lake this year.

Nycticorax nycticorax nævius. Black-crowned Night Heron. A colony of these herons was discovered breeding in the middle of the tule field in May 1900. About 200 nests were counted and by the first of June they all contained young or incubated eggs. Only twenty herons were seen at the lake this year.

Rallus virginianus. Virginia Rail. Noted in marshy meadows on west side of lake.

Fulica americana. American Coot. Very common in tule fields.

Steganopus tricolor. Wilson Phalarope. Not uncommon on west side of lake. Found breeding close to shore.

Recurvirostra americana. American Avocet. A few pairs seen on west side of lake; probably breeding.

Himantopus mexicanus. Black-necked Stilt. Noted along west shore of lake in May and June.

Gallinago delicata. Wilson Snipe. Not uncommon in marshy fields on west side of lake.

Actitis macularia. Spotted Sandpiper. Common breeder along shores of lake.

Ægialitis vocifera. Killdeer. Abundant at lake.

Circus hudsonius. Marsh Hawk. A pair of these hawks observed at the lake in May 1900.

Archibuteo lagopus santi-johannis. American Roughleg.

Falco sparverius deserticolus. Desert Sparrow Hawk. These two hawks have been noted hunting through tule fields in June. The latter nests high up in the Sierras.

Bubo virginianus pallescens. Western Horned Owl. Noted in tule fields in June.

Speotyto cunicularia hypogæa. Burrowing Owl. One seen on fence post near lake in May.

Chordeiles virginianus henryi. Western Nighthawk. Noted flying over tule fields.

Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus. Yellow-headed Blackbird.

Agelaius phœniceus. Red-winged Blackbird. These two blackbirds are common through the tules.

Sturnella magna neglecta. Western Meadowlark. Abundant in grassy meadows near lake.

Scolecophagus cyanocephalus. Brewer Blackbird. Very common around lake.

Ammodramus sandwichensis alaudinus. Western Savana Sparrow. Quite common on west side of lake, breeding close to shore.

Chondestes grammacus strigatus. Western Lark Sparrow. Not uncommon on west side of lake.

Spizella breweri. Brewer Sparrow. Very common in sage brush on east side of lake.

Amphispiza belli nevadensis. Sage Sparrow. A characteristic bird of the sage brush on east side.

Melospiza melodia montana. Mountain Song Sparrow. Noted with young in tules near the last of June.

Pipilo maculatus megalonyx. Spurred Towhee. Abundant in sage brush on east side of lake.

Oreospiza cholura. Green-tailed Towhee. Several noted in a patch of sage brush on south shore.

Petrochelidon lunifrons. Cliff Swallow.

Hirundo erythrogaster. Barn Swallow.

Clivicola riparia. Bank Swallow. All three of the above swallows found breeding near lake.

Geothlypis trichas occidentalis. Western Yellowthroat. They are quite common in the tules.

Oroscoptes montanus. Sage Thrasher. Found quite commonly in sage brush on east side.

Cistothorus palustris plesius. Western Marsh Wren. A very busy little wren in the tules.

Status of the Bicolored Blackbird in Southern California.

BY FRANK S. DAGGETT.

IT is safe to say that during the past ten years hundreds of eggs of the bi-colored blackbird (*Agelaius gubernator*) have been sent from Southern California, and all our collections contained skins of what was supposed to represent that bird.

When the interest in ornithology was first started in California and which culminated in the formation of the Cooper Ornithological Club in 1893, the principal authorities warranted the assumption that *gubernator* occurred in Southern California. Coues' Key gave the distribution as "Pacific Coast U. S. and British Columbia" while the A. O. U. Check-List states, "Pacific Coast district from Western Washington, south to Lower California," etc. With this for a basis we all looked for *gubernator*, and it was found, as we supposed, associated with *Agelaius phoeniceus* of those days. The bird so selected was an immature-looking male, with buff lesser wing coverts, and black middle coverts, answering to the written descriptions of *gubernator*. There is more or less uncertainty as to the status of all our blackbirds, and in 1896 Mr. Grinnell made up a lot of adults and immatures, for transmission to Washington for identification, among them some belonging to the writer. Upon their return we found, among the immatures, several marked *gubernator*. This was long before Mr. Ridgway's revision of the blackbirds, but it confirmed our earlier decision and *gubernator* received a place in the List of Birds of the Pacific Slope of Los Angeles County with the following observation by Mr. Grinnell: "Several specimens of this form have been taken at Bixby and El Monte, and it may breed in this County, as it does commonly to the northward; but I have no reliable data, altho many eggs purporting to be of this bird have been sent from the County."

About a year ago Mr. Grinnell, in order to settle the question, sent me a pair of *gubernator*, in breeding plumage, collected by him in a locality of well known occurrence. The comparison at once threw out the birds which we had known as *gubernator*, and further investigation convinces me that they are what is now known as *A. p. neutralis* Ridgway.

I have examined all the available collections in Southern California, with the same results, and I can find no one here who can produce actual specimens of *gubernator* taken in the southern counties of California.

Unless some one produces specimens, it is safe to say that the bird does not occur here. Certainly the eggs sent out so freely from this part of the state, in years gone by, as *gubernator*, can safely be put down as of Mr. Ridgway's recently described *A. p. neutralis*, for most of them were taken in well known colonies, where none but *neutralis* are found today.