

May, 1908

NOTES FROM SANTA CRUZ ISLAND

Psaltriparus minimus minimus. California Bush-tit. Several seen. One taken.

Regulus calendula. Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Common.

Poliophtila cærulea obscura. Western Gnatcatcher. A gnatcatcher heard on several occasions in the brush. Probably of this species.

Hylocichla ustulata ustulata. Russet-backed Thrush. One secured.

Hylocichla guttata nana. Dwarf Hermit Thrush. Common.

Long Beach, California.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

The Green-winged Teal (*Nettion carolinensis*) breeding in California.—While engaged in field work for the U. S. Biological Survey along the west shore of Tulare Lake, California, I secured a female Green-winged Teal and set of seven eggs, July 7, 1907. The brooding bird was shot as she flew from the nest. Several other ducks of the same species were seen within a few miles, and appeared to be part of a quite local colony.

This is apparently the first record of the nesting of *Nettion carolinensis* in the State.—E. A. GOLDMAN, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.*

Cooper Hawks Attacking Crows.—During the fall of 1907 a flock of crows, numbering perhaps a thousand, frequently came out from the San Francisco Bay shore to spend the day with us at San Geronimo, feeding about the fields and on the hillsides. It happened that about noon on October 27th the flock lit in some trees near our barns. As I came out of the house just after lunch there was quite a commotion in the flock, and it proved that two Cooper Hawks (*Accipiter cooperi*) were attacking the crows, doing some remarkably good team work in their endeavors to lay low one of their dusky enemies. The crows were, however, too alert for the hawks and no loss was inflicted beyond a few feathers. The excitement was so great that I was enabled to walk up on the flock and bag both hawks. One is accustomed to see crows attacking hawks, and it seems rather surprising that the opposite would take place. But in this instance there was no doubt in the world of the true state of the case. The crows were quietly perched on the dead tops of some alders that had been killed by the changing of the course of a small stream, and the hawks deliberately pitched into them, one attacking from above and the other from below. One hawk would perch on top of a tree above the crows while the other would go off a little way and then swoop down on the flock, repeating the operation—with variations. Whether this was all done in a spirit of bravado, or for the purpose of securing a meal, it is of course impossible to determine. My foreman and I watched the game for some time before killing the hawks; then seeing that no damage was being done and fearing to lose the opportunity of destroying such enemies to bird life as the Cooper Hawk has proved itself to be, I walked up to the flock and shot both the members of the attacking party.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Francisco, California.*

Salpinctes obsoletus pulverius restricted to San Nicholas Island.—After carefully examining specimens from San Clemente Island, Mr. Grinnell confirms my opinion that they are *Salpinctes obsoletus* and that the name *S. o. pulverius* should be restricted to the San Nicholas Island Rock Wren.—C. B. LINTON, *Long Beach, California.*

Odds and Ends From Washington State.—What I call my "Old Curiosity Shop," a succession of weed grown fields bordered by alders, is situated in the heart of the Puyallup Valley in an abundantly watered region. It has done unusually well for me during the past fall and winter, having produced the following records which must be considered very unusual for this State.

The first surprise came on November 7, in the shape of a white-winged Dove (*Melopelia leucoptera*), which proved to be an adult female. Even at this date the feathers were in a surprisingly good state of preservation, removing the very unlikely possibilities of its being a cage-bird. This is the only record of this dove from Washington, and we can hardly surmise what could have driven it so far from its natural habitat.

December 16: I flushed two Golden-crowned Sparrows (*Zonotrichia coronata*) that were in

company with a large flock of Oregon Juncos (*Junco hyemalis oregonus*). I shot one of the sparrows which proved to be a male of the year, thus making certain of the record. On January 15, the remaining bird, also a young of the year, was still in the same weed patch, from which we can confidently assume that it will remain there all the remainder of the winter.

On the same date I took an adult female Northern Red-breasted Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus ruber nootkensis*) that had the upper mandible two and a half inches long and curving far over to the right. She was very fat and experienced no difficulty whatever in securing her food as I watched her for some time. This she did by using her long upper mandible much as we do a nut pick, digging the insect life to the surface out of deep crevices in the bark, and then picking it up by turning her head completely over on one side.

January 22: Collected a fine adult male Nuttall Sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys nuttalli*), which is my only record for this sparrow in winter.—J. H. BOWLES, Tacoma, Washington.

Some Birds of Ana Capa Island.—On the 4th of September, 1903, I was landed from a yacht onto Ana Capa Island, which lies east of Santa Cruz Island, California, and separated from it by about five miles of open ocean. Ana Capa is rapidly decreasing in size and one can easily foresee its complete dissolution at no very distant time. The action of the waves has already cut thru it at several points. My stay on the Island was limited to less than an hour; but besides that I was permitted to coast along nearly the whole length of the island in a small boat. There is but scanty vegetation on this Island. I saw a few insects, signs of mice (*Peromyscus*), and one species of lizard (*Uta*).

Besides the usual seabirds of the region I saw the following: One Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) flying; one pair of Mexican Ravens (*Corvus corax sinuatus*); several Rock Wrens (*Salpinctes obsoletus*), these being noted on the highest declivities of the Island; several spotted Sandpipers (*Actitis macularia*) along the surf; several Wandering Tattlers (*Heteractitis incanus*) on partly submerged rocks; one flock of five or six Black Turnstones (*Arenaria melanocephala*); one pair, with three two-thirds grown young, of the Black Oystercatcher (*Haematopus bachmani*) on a point of rocks jutting into the surf; and one Belted Kingfisher (*Ceryle alcyon*) flying along the surf.—J. GRINNELL, Pasadena, California.

The Condor in the San Joaquin Valley.—In Part II of the Life History of the California Condor, published in the January-February, 1908, number of your magazine, the range of the California Condor (*Gymnogyps californianus*) is given as being confined mainly to the southern California coast region. They were formerly not uncommon in the southern part of the San Joaquin Valley. During the years 1872 to 1879 I saw condors, or vultures, as they were usually called, soaring over the valley, then a vast range for cattle and sheep. Generally there were not more than two to be seen, but on one occasion I saw three or four. They were seen occasionally during all of the years mentioned. I never observed one with anything in its talons. In the summer of 1879 I saw three condors and about a dozen buzzards about the carcass of a dead sheep between Tule River and Deer Creek, in Tulare County. I drove by slowly at a distance of about fifty yards. The three condors and one buzzard were eating the carcass when I drew near and the other buzzards were a few paces back, as if waiting their turn. I have heard of the condor since in the southwestern part of the San Joaquin Valley, which is still a cattle and sheep range, and do not doubt that they are occasionally to be seen there, where carrion is abundant at certain seasons of the year.

In conversation with Orlando Barton, who has lived for several years in the northwestern part of Kern County, on the eastern slope of the Coast Range, he informed me that he has often seen the condor there. One large bird in particular he saw many times during a period of two years. He often saw it sitting on a large rock within sight of his house and on an abandoned oil derrick in Sunflower Valley. On one occasion he passed within about seventy yards of it when sitting on a boulder. It rose to its full length, and he estimated it to be four and a half feet high. He picked up a feather twenty-one and a fourth inches in length which fell from one of its wings. He saw it several times feeding on dead lambs. He has not seen this or any other condor since 1906.

In conversation recently with W. F. Dean, of Three Rivers, this (Tulare) county, he stated that several years ago, during a dry season, when there were many sheep dying, he saw eight or ten condors in one day in Yokol Valley, 15 to 20 miles east of Visalia. He did not see more than four together. He mentioned the killing of two condors by parties living in the foothills (Sierra Nevada) of Tulare county. He observed two or three of the large birds eating a dead sheep, and surrounded by buzzards at a respectful distance. Mr. Dean has seen no condors in the Sierra foothills for four or five years.—GEORGE W. STEWART, Visalia, California.