

heard a bird call on the hillside and soon one appeared with something in its mouth. Tho the two birds were so much alike that it was hard to tell them apart, one was much more shy than the other and I believe the shy one was the female. This bird would not go to the nest while the camera was there but flew about giving the call note. When at 11:25 the other bird, which I believe was the male, came, the first bird swallowed the food she carried and flew away. This last arrival carried a long green worm in his bill. This he took to the nest and fed to one young bird. I could see the green sticking up in the youngster's throat as he still kept his mouth open, evidently not fully appreciating that anything had been deposited there. Finally he gave a little swallow, the worm disappeared and he closed his mouth, satisfied. The old bird rested on the edge of the nest about three minutes and I took a bulb exposure. After that he flew up the hillside. Fifteen minutes later both birds came with worms. One went to the nest and fed, but one, as before, would not go to the nest while the camera was there.

Thirty-five minutes later, 12:25, the bird which I took to be the male appeared with an immense wasplike fly dangling from his bill, the body down and head held in mouth. This was fed to more than one young. When the bird had fed this time, I crawled under the camera and green cloth in an effort to get a better view of the bird at the nest. At 12:53 I heard a bird call on the hillside. At 1:06 and 1:10 he called from nearby and gave the scolding note. Evidently I was discovered. At 1:25, however, he came to the nest and fed to one young. As I peekt thru a small hole I saw him resting on the edge of the nest and prest the bulb. As the camera clickt he raised his eyes as if to see whence came the noise, but otherwise was motionless. As before, I gave a bulb exposure and the bird did not stir until it was over, when he flew up over the camera.

At this time the young birds were still quite naked—the only indication that they would ever be otherwise being that the wing quills were just pricking thru.

It was four days before I was again able to visit the nest. Before I reacht the nesting site I was told that the nest was empty. The night before, the family had heard a great commotion among the birds; but not realizing that they might be in distress they paid no attention to it. The next morning, the 23rd, they found the nest empty and the old birds nowhere in sight. The young would have been one week old, but did not leave the nest of their own accord I am sure. I doubt not that they were the victims of a skulking feline. So many of our birds are destroyed in this way that I sometimes wonder that any of them ever grow up. Not until our cats are licensed, or some way provided whereby the surplus strays can be disposed of, will our birds receive the protection that should rightfully be theirs.

Los Angeles, California.

NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF LOS CORONADOS ISLANDS LOWER CALIFORNIA

By PINGREE I. OSBURN

WITH ONE PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

DURING the spring of 1908, it was my privilege to make two trips to the Coronado Islands, a group lying twenty miles due south of San Diego, California, and ten miles from the Mexican coast.

South Island, the largest, is two and a half miles long by one mile wide, and

about five hundred feet high. It is covered on the eastern slope with a sparse growth of cactus and ice plant, and occasional patches of grass and low brush. The western slope is devoid of vegetation. This island is more heavily overgrown with brush than the others and consequently contains more birds. The Quail are found here only, and would undoubtedly be quite numerous were it not for the depredations of a wild house-cat, and the occasional visits of excursionists carrying guns.

The easternmost of the two middle islands is about three-quarters of a mile north of South Island, and is merely a large jagged rock covered with low brush and guano. The other is twice as large and lies a short distance to the westward. It contains nothing of interest and is unimportant.

About three-quarters of a mile northwest is North Island, the most interesting of the group. This island is one and a half miles long and three-quarters of a mile wide, and about seven hundred feet high at the highest point. The sides are very steep and are only accessible at the amphitheater-like slope near the eastern extremity. The entire island is overgrown with ice plant, which in the amphi-



NESTING SITE OF XANTUS MURRELET IN CAVE AT EXTREME RIGHT OF
OPPOSITE SHORE: NORTH ISLAND, LOS CORONADOS

theater covers up a soft powdery earth. While digging out Auklets our clothing became saturated with the sticky fluid from the ice plant, and coated with mud, which made our work very much harder. However, this was not the only strenuous part of our collecting, for during my last trip we were caught in a heavy wind while three miles south of North Island. With the wind and current against us our task was by no means an easy one; but these experiences, if not too serious, lend interest to a trip.

On April 4, 1908, Mr. R. H. Beck and the writer made our first trip to the islands. The little launch "McKinley" took us out and landed us at the cove near the north end of South Island. We stayed on the Island one week, making side trips to North and Middle Islands to photograph and collect in the rookeries there.

Two months later, on May 30, with a friend, Mr. Chester Lamb, I made the second trip. This time we camped on North Island at the base of the cliff on the eastern end.

By making two trips at these different dates I was, therefore, able to ascertain with some certainty the breeding habits of the sea birds of the islands. On the

first trip we visited the immense colony of *Pelecanus californicus* on North Island and *Phalacrocorax penicillatus* on Middle Island. On June 1st, we camped in the heart of the Auklet colony, and within a few yards of the colony of *Larus occidentalis*.

Besides birds we found reptiles in abundance on South Island and a mouse (*Peromyscus*), species unknown, very abundant on North Island. Mr. Beck collected a large series of lizards, and six rattle snakes and Mr. Ad. van Rossem one gopher snake.

Acknowledgements are due Mr. Henry B. Kaeding for identification of doubtful species and general help on the biota of the Islands.

The following is a complete list of the birds we found on the Islands, covering a period from April 4 to June 6.

Ptychoramphus aleuticus. Cassin Auklet. North Island was completely covered with burrows of this species. During our week's stay Mr. Lamb and I explored it carefully and the approximate census was between six and eight thousand burrows. On April 6 most of the burrows were empty, only one out of every five that we examined being occupied, but on June 1 nearly every burrow examined contained either young in the down or incubated egg. A few fresh eggs were found. The nests most accessible were in the rocky soil in the Pelican colony where simply overturning a rock would disclose the egg. We found the eggs sometimes covered with soft sediment, a method of concealment perhaps. The eggs were smooth, and varied in color from a pure white to dark brown from nest stains. There was usually one egg to a burrow; in a few cases we found two birds occupying the same burrow. The burrows ranged in length from eight inches to five feet. The nest was usually lined with dry grass and frequently small sticks and feathers.

Brachyramphus hypoleucus. Xantus Murrelet. The first note of this species nesting on the Coronados was made by Mr. Beck on April 4, 1908. He found two sets high up on the side of South Island. I collected two females and one male June 1, 4, and 5. A complete account of this species as nesting on Los Coronados Islands is found in the CONDOR, Vol. XI, no. 1, pages 8 and 9.

Larus occidentalis. Western Gull. Hundreds of Western Gulls were flying over the Pelican colony on April 16 and would destroy the eggs at every opportunity. They had not yet begun to lay, but during the week of May 31 to June 6 nearly all the nests contained young in the down or incubated eggs.

Larus californicus. California Gull. Three birds of this species were noted April 6 near South Island.

Puffinus opisthomelas. Black-vented Shearwater. A small flock was seen resting on the water off South Island April 8.

Oceanodroma socorroensis. Socorro Petrel. Found nesting on Middle Island. Several adults collected and one fresh egg secured by Mr. Lamb June 4.

Phalacrocorax auritus albociliatus. Farallone Cormorant. Nesting scatteringly in the California Brown Pelican colony on North Island. Adults in full breeding plumage were taken. On June 1 we found fifteen pairs nesting (incubated eggs) in the Pelican colony which was then practically deserted.

Phalacrocorax penicillatus. Brandt Cormorant. This was by far the most abundant Cormorant on the islands. On April 8 we found a colony of over one hundred pairs nesting on Middle Island. The nests were made of dried seaweed and covered with guano. The sets ranged from three to five, four being the commonest. Only one set of five was noted. On June 1 we located a colony of ninety-five pairs on an outlying rock on the west end of North Island which joins the main island by a

natural bridge. The eggs averaged smaller than the ones taken in April, and all eggs were incubated.

Phalacrocorax pelagicus resplendens. Baird Cormorant. Two pairs were nesting on North Island on April 8, but their nests were inaccessible. One dead adult was found in the surf May 31.

Pelecanus californicus. California Brown Pelican. About five hundred pairs nested on North Island April 8. The colony extended from the south end to within one-half mile of the north end. The majority of the nests contained sets of three, very few two, but none with more than three. On the first of June we made a careful survey of the colony and found only four sets of eggs, altho many nests of the first setting contained large young.

Totanus melanoleucus. Greater Yellow-legs. One shot on South Island April 11 by Beck.

Heteractitis incanus. Wandering Tattler. One taken April 8 and one April 9, both females; not common.

Actitis macularia. Spotted Sandpiper. Very rare; one male taken on North Island June 1st.

Arenaria melanocephala. Black Turnstone. Common; several taken.

Haematopus bachmani. Black Oystercatcher. Fairly common on all the islands. Seen only at low tide. Three skins taken, one April 6 and two June 4, showing signs of breeding.

Lophortyx sp.? Quail. Fairly common on South Island. A few specimens secured, but status of the species undetermined.

Falco peregrinus anatum. Duck Hawk. Three pairs were nesting on South Island, and two pairs on North Island. All nests were inaccessible. Three specimens were secured.

Falco sparverius phalæna. Desert Sparrow Hawk. One bird, probably of this species, was seen hovering over North Island April 8.

Asio accipitrinus. Short-eared Owl. One flushed from a bush on North Island April 8.

Ceryle alcyon. Belted Kingfisher. One seen fishing near camp on South Island April 10.

Aeronautes melanoleucus. White-throated Swift. A few seen flying over-head on South Island April 5, and over North Island June 2. One secured by Beck.

Calypte anna. Anna Hummingbird. Not common; only seen on the largest island.

Sayornis saya. Say Phoebe. Seen on North Island April 8.

Empidonax difficilis. Western Flycatcher. Fairly common on the hillside of North Island.

Empidonax traillii. Traill Flycatcher. One taken June 4 on North Island.

Corvus corax sinuatus. American Raven. Saw about six individuals during week of April 4 to April 11 on South Island.

Carpodacus clementis. San Clemente House Finch. These birds were abundant on all the islands. The males were of bright fine plumage, the coloration on the breast and head varying from a bright red to a yellowish orange.

Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli. Gambel Sparrow. One taken on South Island April 4 and several seen on North Island April 8.

Melospiza coronatorum. Coronado Song Sparrow. Fairly common on all the islands. Three young just able to fly were seen on Middle Island April 8.

Spizella passerina arizonae. Western Chipping Sparrow. Noted April 8 on North Island; rare.

Pipilo maculatus subsp.? A Towhee was seen several times on South Island.
Helminthophila celata. Lutescent Warbler. Rare; two seen on North Island April 8.

Salpinctes obsoletus. Rock Wren. Common; noted on all the islands. By watching a pair of these birds I located their nest near camp on South Island April 5. It was ten feet from the tent and about sixteen feet above the water. The nesting cavity was lined with sticks and pebbles, but contained no eggs.

Poliophtila caerulea obscura. Western Gnatcatcher. A few were seen on South Island flitting about in low bushes near the top of the ridge. About ten individuals were seen.

Pasadena, California.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

The Northern Spotted Owl in California.—There is in the Univ. Calif. Mus. Vert. Zool. collection a specimen (no. 5941) of the Spotted Owl, ♀ adult, taken by F. W. Bancroft on Mt. Tamalpais, Marin Co., California, May 23, 1896. This appears to make the first record of the species in California north or west of Big Trees, Calaveras County, where found by Belding (Land Bds. Pac. Dist., 1899, 49). Furthermore, a comparison of the Tamalpais owl with examples from the San Gabriel Mountains of Los Angeles county, shows the former to belong to a separate race, very probably meriting the name *Strix occidentalis caurina*. The name *Syrinium occidentale caurinum* was applied by Dr. C. Hart Merriam to a race discovered in the Puget Sound Region. The characters pointed out by him (*Auk* XV, January, 1898, p. 39) seem to hold in every respect for the Tamalpais bird, tho evidently in a less degree. I have never seen an example of the Northern Spotted Owl from the Puget Sound region; but Merriam's description leaves me in little doubt but that I am safe in using his name for the race in the extreme southern end of the same continuous humid coast region. Briefly, the Tamalpais Owl, as compared with southern specimens, has the white-spotting everywhere, especially on top of the head, reduced; the dark areas, therefore, extended, and darker; the tipplings of the wing and tail feathers not pure white, but dusky marbled; and the plumage of the feet more heavily dark marked.—J. GRINNELL, *University of California, Berkeley, California.*

Sumichrast Blackbird in Tamaulipas, Mexico.—Mr. E. W. Nelson has identified as belonging to this species (*Dives dives*) a skin in my collection (no. 11219; ♀ ad.; near Tampico, Tamaulipas; Dec. 18, 1908; A. P. S.) taken by one of my assistants on the open plain about halfway between Tampico and Altamira, Tamaulipas. It was the only individual of the species secured at the time. This somewhat extends the range of *Dives dives* as given by Ridgway in his *Birds of North and Middle America*, Part II, page 254.—AUSTIN PAUL SMITH, *Brownsville, Texas.*

Note on the Nesting of the Cliff Swallow.—On April 29, 1909, I found a set of seven eggs of the Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*). The nest was of the usual type, one of a colony under the eaves of a barn. Is not a set of this number unusual?—D. I. SHEPARDSON, *Los Angeles, California.*

Some Unusual Records from Portland, Oregon.—Black-crowned Night Heron (*Nycticorax n. naevius*): A young male secured on July 29, 1908, on Government Island in the Columbia, twelve miles east of the city.

Mountain Chickadee (*Penthestes gambeli*): An adult female taken December 10, 1908, along the Columbia; it was in company with a flock of *P. atricapillus accidentalis*. I believe this is the first record from this vicinity.

Pileolated Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla pileolata*): A juvenile male taken December 11, 1908, east of the city, was in company with a large flock of Oregon Chickadees, Winter Wrens and Gairdner Woodpeckers, feeding among the willows along the river. A very unusual time of year for this summer warbler considering the cold stormy weather we had had for the past two months.

Arctic Horned Owl (*Bubo virginianus subarcticus*): A male taken during the blizzard in January, 1909.