

Dark-bodied Shearwater (*Puffinus griseus*). Abundant at sea during our entire trip.

Black Petrel (*Oceanodroma melania*). Common out at sea. None of these birds were seen within a mile or two of land at any time and, altho we made particular search for evidence of their breeding, we found none.

We left San Miguel on the evening of June 23, and arrived in San Pedro the afternoon of the 24th, well satisfied with the results of our trip, but glad to be out of the everlasting wind.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Larus canus: a Correction.—Shortly after my record of the capture of a young Mew Gull (*L. canus*) appeared in THE CONDOR (vol. VIII, p. 75) I received two gulls from North Carolina in immature plumage, one of which was evidently the Ring-billed (*L. delawarensis*) and the other intermediate between this and my Pacific Beach bird. This made me strongly suspect that both these were also *L. delawarensis*, and later I was able to compare these skins and other Ring-billed Gulls with a series of European specimens of *L. canus* in the collection of Dr. Jonathan Dwight, Jr., with the following result: *L. canus* has a more slender bill and shorter wing and tail than *L. delawarensis*; but the male *L. canus* is the same size as the female of *L. delawarensis*, tho the bill is slightly more slender. This slight difference in size is the only character separating the young of the two species in first winter plumage. My bird should therefore stand as *L. delawarensis*, and to this species, I suspect, most California records of *L. canus* belong.—LOUIS B. BISHOP.

A Southern California Spring Record for the Common Tern.—May 24, 1910, I took two specimens of the Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) from a flock of 12 or 15 that were fishing near the outlet of the Los Angeles outfall sewer at Hyperion Beach, Los Angeles County.

The birds taken were adult male and female and were in almost full summer plumage. So far as I know, there are only two previous records for this species in southern California and they are both in the fall. One of these records was by H. W. Marsden at Pacific Beach, San Diego County, in September, 1904; and the other by C. B. Linton at Alamitos Bay, Los Angeles County, in September, 1907. These instances have both been previously recorded in THE CONDOR.—G. WILLETT.

Cowbird again Noted in Los Angeles County.—On July 1, 1910, with George Willett and Antonin and Alphonse Jay, I was down in the lowland willows, and we found three nests of the California Cuckoo (*Coccyzus a. occidentalis*)—one with young less than a week old, one nest with four eggs, and one with three eggs. While passing along the road we observed a bird which I am morally sure was a female Cowbird (*Molothrus a. obscurus?*) as it was considerably less in size than a female Brewer Blackbird, and of the umber brown color throat, of the eastern female cowbird. While in the willows, Antonin Jay discovered a nest of the Traill Flycatcher, with two eggs of its own and one of the cowbird; and while I was watching the cuckoo with her brood of young, a male yellowthroat came hopping along with a young cowbird in close tow, coming within ten feet of where I sat. This youngster was fully fledged, but still bobtailed, and was about twice the size of the yellowthroat; the yellowthroat would frequently run up to him and put something into his bill. The little fellow was, as nearly as I could make out, quite streaked.—J. EUGENE LAW.

An Additional Song Sparrow for California.—A California-taken song sparrow recently submitted to me for determination proves to be *Melospiza melodia caurina* Ridgway. It is identical in every respect with numerous skins of *M. m. caurina* in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology collection, from several localities in southeastern Alaska. I have never seen anything like it before from California. The specimen is a female, no. 34, collection of C. Irvin Clay, and was obtained at Eureka, Humboldt County, California, February 20, 1910.

Mr. C. I. Clay, who personally secured this rare bird, writes me that this same individual was first seen on January 17, and was noted on five subsequent occasions, always in exactly the same locality, up to February 20 when it was shot. The bird staid among drift-wood on the ocean beach. It was shy, and would run along in the shelter of logs, peeking over occasionally,

until closely prest, when it would fly a short distance. After being chased up the beach some 200 yards it would fly out around the pursuer back to its original rendezvous. This procedure would be repeated over and over.

It is thus apparent that the stranger was a beach-comber in habits, just as are the song sparrows in the summer home of *M. m. caurina*, in Alaska, and quite different in habits from the resident race of the Humboldt Bay region. I am very much indebted to Mr. Clay for the above information, and especially for the privilege of putting his capture on record, it being, as far as I know, the first for California.—J. GRINNELL.

Red Phalarope in Southern California in Winter.—In the May number of *THE CONDOR* H. S. Swarth mentioned the scarcity of winter records for the Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) in California.

In November and December, 1907, C. B. Linton and myself found this species very abundant around Anacapa and Santa Cruz Islands. This note was published by Mr. Linton and may be found in *THE CONDOR*, Vol. X, 1908, p. 126. This was probably overlooked by Mr. Swarth.

Many specimens of this Phalarope were taken at this time and are now in the collections of Mr. Linton and myself. During the last week of November there were thousands of the birds and some remained well into December. I do not believe, however, that they staid thru the entire winter.—G. WILLETT.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

The New A. O. U. Check List.—Now that the Third Edition of the Check-List of North American Birds has actually appeared the student may at last discard with safety his worn-to-tatters 1895 copy, interlined, crost-out, emended, and procure for himself a clean new copy. Having done so, if he be of progressive tendency, mindful ever of the signs of advance in his field, he will at once begin again to interline, erase, re-instate, amplify. And herein lies the enormous scientific value of such a periodic compendium as the Check-List: it constitutes a basis for departure anew.

During the fifteen years which have elapst—altogether too long a time to allow between revized editions of a work of this sort—since the publication of the Second Edition, numerous additions and changes in status relative to North American birds have resulted from the constant activity in their study. By means of frequent supplements, printed in *The Auk*, the A. O. U. Committee on Nomenclature has kept the public posted on those of the proposed changes of which it has approved. To the student who has watcht this series of supplements, therefore, the new Check-List offers no startling innovations on this score. Since the classification and sequence employed in the Third Edition is practically the same as used in the Second, the only remaining really great point of improvement is in the much more full and accurately exprest statements of the ranges of species.

The adoption of the modern method of expressing animal distribution in terms of life zones leads to a conciseness of statement not before achieved. And the interpolation of a colored map of the Zones of North America, compiled by C. Hart Merriam and his assistants of the Biological Survey, gives to the reader unfamiliar with this method an invaluable key to the situation.

It is a recognized difficulty to bild a statement of range consistent with all known facts and yet keep it within the small space necessitated by the practical limits of a hand-book. Loose statements in the ranges of species, as given in the Check-List, appear to be relatively rare. A few are apparent: The range of *Junco hyemalis pinosus* is stated to be "Coast strip of San Mateo and northern Monterey counties, California." There is thus no indication that the species is just as well known to occupy suitable ground in the intervening territory (Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties). It is stated that *Melospiza lincolni lincolni* "winters from San Jacinto Mountains" etc.; we were not aware that the bird wintered in any of our mountains.

The breeding range of *Passerculus rostratus rostratus* is given as "unknown, but probably from about San Pedro, California, to" etc.; this is most emphatically *not* probable, as the coastal localities of southern California are well known to have been pretty thoroly searcht without finding any conclusive evidence of the breeding of the species within the state. The breeding range of a species cannot be considered as establish by one or two instances of occurrence of individual birds in summer.

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