

though the bird was not secured it was plainly visible at a distance of not over 50 feet, as it sat on a fence post watching me. It was without doubt referable to this subspecies.

This winter there has been a remarkable vertical migration of the Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*) from the higher mountains to the east of us, to the much lower canyons on the west leading to the coast. Such a migration is a very rare event here, even for a few birds. This winter they have come down in good-sized flocks and have not appeared to be any more wild than Mourning Doves would be. It has not been in any way an unusual winter in the mountains, so their coming is rather hard to explain.

There seem to have been an unusual number of the Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*) seen in the state this winter. In the latter part of January my attention was called to a large white bird flying north very high up and which was undoubtedly of this species. A few days afterwards three were reported to me as having been seen on a lake near here. Stephens, in his paper on the birds of San Diego County, mentions the species as "a rare winter visitant". I have lived in the county for thirty years and never saw it before.—C. S. SHARP, *Escondido, California, April 15, 1920.*

Notes on Nutcrackers in Monterey County, California—Persistent reports during the past winter of the Clark Nutcracker, or Clark Crow as so many people call it (*Nucifraga columbiana*), at Pacific Grove and Carmel, Monterey County, California, finally proved too much for my curiosity to withstand and led me to investigate the matter in person. A trip to Carmel was made on March 8, 1920, and one of these somber but saucy birds was about the first bird in view as the main street was reached. For the next two weeks one or more of these fellows was seen almost every day, although there were a couple of days toward the last of my stay when none was seen or heard. On those two days I thought that they must at last have left for the higher altitudes which are their natural abode, but the succeeding days showed them to be still with us.

While the Nutcrackers were usually in small companies they did not seem actually to flock together and nine was the largest number that I was positive of having seen at one time. There may have been more in the town, but there appeared to be good reason to believe that there were not *many* more, if any, for the town is small and these birds are commonly very noisy. When this number had collected in a small area no others were heard, at any rate.

The Nutcrackers had discovered that kitchen doors and back yards were good for some free "hand-outs", and they systematically visited many such. While they fed to some extent on the Monterey pines, apparently more intent upon the tips of young buds than upon the contents of the cones, they picked also a good many scraps and bits of grain or crumbs in the streets, paying no attention to people twenty or thirty feet away, but becoming wary of closer approach. They seemed to have certain hours for being in certain places, and for the first few days of my stay appeared in the street opposite the dining room window while we were at breakfast.

The cook at the El Monte Hotel used to put some bits of food on top of an eight-foot stump, reachable from the kitchen steps, and this out-door dining room was visited at least once a day for quite a while. As the household cat also had an eye to this arrangement, which in fact was originally made on his account, and as his visits were very irregular we could not always count on when the birds would come to feed here, as the cat was apt to include his avian visitors among the list of edibles—as I found out to my sorrow.

Dr. Walter K. Fisher, living in Pacific Grove, Monterey County, reported them as being there during the winter, and on March 22 I went over to stay a few days with him. There were some of the Nutcrackers in the town, but not as much in evidence as in the smaller town of Carmel. Dr. Fisher said that they seemed to come and go and thought that possibly they often made the trip from one town to the other, a distance of only three or four miles, with a hilly forest between.

In Pacific Grove lived a young lady who had enjoyed the sort of education that trains the mind for accurate observation, and this lady told me that on March 24, while she and her mother were resting from a walk in a picnic ground outside the town limits, some Nutcrackers came around and were feeding on crumbs, etc., left by picnic parties. As they were watching them one of the Nutcrackers began gathering sticks and other

nest-building material and flew with this to a neighboring clump of pine trees. I went with her the next day to the spot, but saw neither the birds nor any evidence of a nest, which, however, does not in any way cast aspersion upon her word. While the bird may not have been actually building, the instinct may have been strong and the nesting season was at hand.

As late as the last week in April the Nutcrackers were still in Carmel and Pacific Grove, as reported to me by Mr. F. C. Holman, a member of the C. O. C., and with whom I was collecting during this stay. Dr. Fisher thought they might possibly change their habits and nest somewhere in the vicinity, and promised to watch them as far as lay in his power.

It was my good fortune during the fortnight spent in Carmel to come across two specimens of the Slate-colored Junco (*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*) to add to the comparatively few records for this state. One of these was taken at Carmel on March 12, and the other in Pine Canyon, near Salinas, Monterey County, on March 19.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, May 6, 1920.*

Western Tanager in Santa Cruz Mountains in Summer.—While on a visit at Alma, Santa Clara County, California, from June 16 to 23, 1917, I heard and saw a number of Western Tanagers (*Piranga ludoviciana*). From perches well up in the coniferous trees the males were droning out their monotonous songs, and to all appearances the species was established for the summer.—TRACY I. STORER, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, May 14, 1920.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

Perhaps the most important ornithological happening announced in recent months is the resumption of activity on the part of the American Ornithologists' Union Committee on Nomenclature. According to the April *Auk* a two-day meeting was held in Washington, D. C., in February. As lately reconstituted the committee consists of Witmer Stone, Jonathan Dwight, H. C. Oberholser, T. S. Palmer, and Charles W. Richmond. It seems to us that this is a well-balanced representation of our ornithologists, as regards the varying views entertained currently in systematic ornithology. Probably no one question is more pressing than that of the constitution of the genus. In this connection we wish to call attention to the valuable article by the Chairman of the committee, Dr. Stone, in *Science* (vol. LI, April 30, 1920), entitled "The Use and Abuse of the Genus". This article sets forth precisely the dangers which threaten as a result of unlimited splitting, and, in our mind, makes the sanest sort of recommendations as to the course of action which should be followed henceforth by working systematists. It is fortunate that a man of Dr. Stone's views is at the head of the committee which will determine the names employed in the next official check-list of North American birds.

Mr. C. M. Goethe, of the California Nature Study League, Sacramento, gives a good pointer for bird students. He writes under date of June 2: Again I have been impressed with the advantages of the sleeping bag in bird study. On a trip last week-end into Cache Creek Canyon, Yolo County, dawn brought several thrilling experiences scarcely to be obtained otherwise. Quail with their young came almost within arm's reach. An oriole sang from a perch in a redbud immediately above the sleeping bag. Titmouses, flycatchers and grosbeaks were watched at similarly close range.

Dr. Edward W. Nelson, Chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, is spending the summer in northwestern Alaska, where he is looking after the reindeer problem which was assigned to the Survey for attention. Dr. Nelson, it will be recalled, spent four years, 1877-1881, in Alaska, chiefly in the vicinity of Saint Michael. His report upon the birds observed by him during that period remains the most important ornithological publication ever issued relative to Alaska.

Miss Ellen Scripps, of La Jolla, California, is giving the San Diego Society of Natural History two thousand dollars per month, to be continued for two years, to enable the Society to move into larger quarters and to