

Food of Western House Wrens.—The microscopic dissections of birds in the field, tabulated by Lee R. Dice and published in the May CONDOR, makes a person who takes most of his 4:30 A. M. observations from a downy couch on the sleeping porch feel that he is using a very lazy method. A strong resolution to profit by the example which Mr. Dice has set, resulted in the following table compiled by the writer from observations made between 10:20 and 11:20 A. M., June 15, 1921. The subjects were a family of eight nestling Western House Wrens (*Troglodytes aedon parkmani*) which were being fed by parents so tame that they could be watched from a distance of six feet. This made it possible to identify with a fair degree of accuracy the items on the bill of fare.

Everything offered was apparently devoured with alacrity except one gray and yellow beetle of considerable size, which one of the parents left inside of the box, but removed after a moment's interval. This is not included in the list.

Table of food eaten by 8 nestling Western House Wrens; Berkeley, California, June 15, 1921; 10:20 to 11:20 A. M.; temperature, 65°; wind, west.

Kind of food	Average per bird	Total number
Lady-bug .....	.625	5
Crane-fly .....	.5	4
Beetles (large) .....	.625	5
Beetles (small) .....	.5	4
Wire-fly .....	.25	2
Lace-wings .....	.125	1
Leaf-hopper .....	.125	1
Cricket .....	.625	5
Grasshopper .....	.125	1
Butterfly .....	.125	1
Moth .....	.125	1
Milliped .....	.125	1
Grub .....	.125	1
Unknown .....	.125	1
Total number of feedings		33
Average amount per bird		4.125
Average time between feedings	1 min. 49.08 sec.	
Average time per bird between feedings	14 min. 32.7 sec.	
Number of kinds of food		14
Number of feedings per parent per hour		16.5
Average time consumed in finding food	3 min. 38 sec.	
Number of excreta removed		6

—AMELIA S. ALLEN, Berkeley, California, June 30, 1921.

Vermilion Flycatcher in Western San Bernardino County, in Summer.—On June 28, 1921, I found a pair of Vermilion Flycatchers (*Pyrocephalus rubinus mexicana*) at the Cushenbury Ranch at the base of the east slope of the San Bernardino Range, in San Bernardino County, California. Although I did not find a nest, I have no doubt that the birds were breeding as they were both busy about a fork high up in a cottonwood and the male was constantly indulging in his flight song.—RALPH HOFFMANN, Carpinteria, California, July 16, 1921.

Gray Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus rusticolus*) in Stevens County, Washington.—During a recent visit to Colville, Stevens County, Washington, I saw a fine mounted female of this species in the taxidermist shop operated by Mr. L. Loew. The specimen was shot on February 10, 1917, by a farmer living at Echo about ten miles north of Colville. The bird is mounted with spread wings and is in fine winter plumage. Mr. Loew informs me that this is the only record of the species that has come to his attention during the many years he has been in the taxidermist business in Washington.—STANLEY G. JEWETT, Portland, Oregon, June 11, 1921.

Cassin Kingbird in Montana.—Marcus A. Hanna, while engaged in field investigations in central Montana, in August, 1918, obtained specimens of the Cassin Kingbird

(*Tyrannus vociferans*), a species apparently hitherto undetected in the State. In the course of his work Mr. Hanna camped for a few days in the Bull Mountains, about 16 miles to the southward of Roundup, Musselshell County. The principal forest covering of these hills consists of groves of yellow pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), which cover much of the higher ground and extend northward to the valley of the Musselshell. Among these pines the birds were found in small groups—three individuals on August 5, two on August 6, and four on August 7. They flew from one clump of pines to another, stopping only on the tallest trees, and there only for a short time. Three specimens were collected—two adult males on August 5, and a young bird on August 6. The last was still in juvenal plumage, and manifestly so recently from the nest as to make it practically certain that it was raised in the vicinity. These specimens are now in the Biological Survey collection.—EDWARD A. PREBLE, *Washington, D. C., July 5, 1921.*

A New Bird for Larimer County, Colorado.—About May 10, 1921, a Mexican boy captured alive a barn owl (*Aluco pratincola*) near Laporte, five miles west of Fort Collins. This owl is now in a cage in a local garage.—W. L. BURNETT, *State Agricultural College, Fort Collins, Colorado, June 10, 1921.*

Flocking Habits of the California Valley Quail.—The following observations were made between December 1, 1919, and May 1, 1920, on a farm which is located near Ripon, California, and about a mile from the Stanislaus River. The farm consists mainly of orchard, the trees being of three varieties, almond, cherries and peaches. A large brush pile was located at one edge of the orchard, about thirty yards from the dwelling house. The first time I noticed the particular flock of Valley Quail (*Lophortyx californicus vallicola*) in question was one morning about ten o'clock when I saw twenty-three birds making their way through the orchard to this brush pile. I found that this action was of regular occurrence with the flock and each morning, some time between the hours of nine and eleven, the flock gradually wended its way towards this protection. My first thought was that in addition to their using it as a place of refuge during the day, the birds roosted in the brush pile at night.

But upon further observation I found that the birds, instead of roosting in the brush pile, merely collected there during the day time for shelter when not searching for food. The "come-right-here" call was often sounded by one member of the flock which was posted some distance above ground for wide observation, though usually hidden in the brush. If a person approached, the bird would utter a call of alarm and disappear into the brush. The brush pile was of considerable size and though I tried to frighten the birds by beating the brush with sticks they merely retreated farther into the middle for protection.

Later observations showed that the birds roosted in some eucalyptus trees about two hundred yards from the brush pile. Each evening at dusk the flock came through the orchard toward the eucalyptus trees usually from a given direction along the bank of an irrigation ditch. As these trees were located in the stable yard the birds usually fed near the barn for some ten or fifteen minutes before flying to their roosting place. It was interesting to note that, usually, only one bird was in flight to the trees at a time, though once stimulated to flight by the leader, the whole flock was lost among the leaves in a remarkably short time. If a part of the flock was disturbed after the flight had begun, the remainder, instead of flying straight to roost, would fly out into the orchard for a time. This was probably a protective measure to lead one off the trail.

At dawn the flock would fly from the trees and proceed into the orchard for food. I wondered if the birds had a definite route of travel, but was unable to follow this out if such were the case. They traversed different parts of the orchard on different days. After foraging in the orchard and adjoining fields they would return to the brush pile for the middle part of the day. The direction from which they came to the brush pile varied on different days. They again returned to the orchard for a feeding trip in the afternoon after which they proceeded to the gum trees to roost.

Their modes of progress while in the field were interesting. At times I was led to think that a certain member of the flock was always followed as leader, while at other times there seemed to be no definite order, the one taking the lead which did not lag behind to feed. The flock, however, usually presented a definite "V" shape, the apex