

YARBLU
CHAD TO VILL
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WOOBOM

Heermann Gull (*Larus heermanni*). An adult male was brought to me on March 20, 1919. It had been found dead on Pinos Altos Mountain, nine miles north of Silver City. On making up the skin I found the bird to be in very poor flesh, and a small shot found in its body indicated that it had been crippled, probably on one of the small irrigation ponds south of here. Mrs. Florence Merriam Bailey advises me that this is a new record for New Mexico.

Great-tailed Grackle (*Megaquiscalus major macrourus*). I took an adult male May 24, 1920, on an irrigation pond on the Mimbres River, thirty miles southeast of here. No others could be found at this time or on several subsequent trips. Mrs. Bailey advises me that the only other records for the state are of a specimen taken at Las Cruces May 15, 1913, and a report of a pair nesting at La Mesa.

Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*). A female was taken May 22, 1921, on the Mimbres River, thirty miles southeast of here, in Luna County. It was flying alone at about six P. M. Wing measures 127.1 mm., and tail 42.4 mm. I am indebted to J. Eugene Law for identification and measurements.—R. T. KELLOGG, *Silver City, New Mexico, October 24, 1921.*

Notes on the Voice of the California Screech Owl.—The following notes and observations were made in the vicinity of Palo Alto, California, from June 1 to November 1, 1921.

The California Screech Owl (*Otus asio bendirei*) is a very tame and friendly bird. At times one can be approached to within arm's length. One curious fact is that when a light is put full in the face, at distances ranging from five to twenty feet, the bird does not seem to be in the least blinded, but looks over and past the light, and stares at the face of the observer. The eyes do not ordinarily glow, but are very distinct, the pupil and iris standing out in strong contrast. On only one occasion have I seen this rule broken. The owl in this case was within five feet, and on the same level with the light. It looked steadily at my face, over the light, but its eyes glowed with a soft honey color.

I have divided the calls under six separate headings, but there are a great many more, as they shade off into each other a good deal. The six noted here, however, are always clear and distinct. The first is the familiar, soft, quavering, "oo-oo-oo", known to nearly everyone. It is generally repeated steadily and monotonously. It seems to be a call of contentment, given when the bird is full fed.

The second is the same as the first, but with a soft whistling undertone, such as is produced by whistling with the edge of a card against the lips. I have heard this call only during the breeding season. It seems to be used to call another bird. On several occasions I have found a pair of the birds sitting side by side, one of them, presumably the male, giving this call, while the other answered with a sharp whistle. The two calls were exchanged, back and forth, for some time as though the birds were carrying on a conversation.

Number three is a liquid, clucking, "prit, prit", which seems to indicate curiosity. It is sometimes accompanied by a snapping of the beak. One bird swooped at me on several consecutive nights, going over my head and snapping his bill fiercely as he passed. I finally turned my light on him when at the bottom of his swoop and within arm's length, which seemed to disconcert him, as he flew into a neighboring tree and began to cluck and snap his beak.

The fourth is a loud clear scream, a most blood-curdling sound. It may be said to resemble the screeching of an enraged cat. I have heard it on only one occasion. It was repeated several times on the night of August 7, 1921, though whether by the same individual each time I could not determine. When I approached the tree from which the screaming came, the owl dropped into the inquiring, "prit, prit".

Number five is a guttural croaking, sounding exactly like the croaking of a heron. I have heard this call on only two occasions. The first time I was unable to get my light on the bird, and thought it a night heron, but the second time I saw the owl plainly. The call consists of only a single note.

The sixth is a high pitched, whining note resembling the crying of a puppy.

The first three calls are the most common. In fact after midnight there is nearly always an owl within hearing giving one of the calls. They can and do change from

one call to another and back again. During the breeding season they do not seem to have any regular hunting ground, but when the young are grown they become solitary, and do not go very far from home. Although they are very plentiful and I have spent much time in observing them, I have never been able to find a nest, or the hole of a solitary individual. They make good pets, eating raw meat, or mice, and becoming quite tame. When irritated they make comical efforts at defence, throwing themselves on their backs, snapping their beaks and grasping with the claws. They are too small to be serious antagonists, however. One which I kept for some time would "sing".—PAUL BONNOT, *Stanford University, California, November 7, 1921.*

Early Nesting of the Tricolored Blackbird and Mallard.—At Walker Basin, Kern County, California, on April 2, 1921, van Rossem made note of the following nestings which so far antedate anything published that a record of them is in order.

Agelaius tricolor. Colony of about twenty pairs in an old dead tule patch. From one fresh to four eggs incubated were noted, and one female was seen carrying food, probably to small young.

Anas platyrhynchos. Nest with eight apparently fresh eggs in a clump of grass near the small stream which winds about and through the meadow.

These dates would be early even for the lowlands, but seem extraordinarily so for this mountain meadow where the temperature was close to freezing at night, and where several inches of snow fell on the night of the 3rd of April.—D. R. DICKEY and A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *Pasadena, California, November 25, 1921.*

A Correction: Brewer Blackbird Not Occurring in Northern British Columbia.—In the *Condor* for March, 1919 (vol. 21, p. 33), under the title of *The Summer Birds of Hazelton, British Columbia*, I recorded the common nesting and the taking of two specimens of the Brewer Blackbird (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*). At the instigation of Mr. H. S. Swarth, I recently re-examined these birds. They consist of an adult male and a young bird in post-juvenile plumage. The adult is worn and dull and shows more purple reflection on the head than is usual in the Rusty Blackbird. The juvenile shows no indication at all of the rust so characteristic of the first winter plumage of that species. The measurements, however, are plain, and, in spite of superficial resemblances to *cyanocephalus*, I am compelled to reconsider my first too hasty conclusion and re-identify both birds as Rusty Blackbirds (*Euphagus carolinus*). There is, therefore, at present no record of the Brewer Blackbird in that section of British Columbia. In extenuation of my apparent carelessness I would like to state that at the time of writing the above paper the Rusty Blackbird had not been recorded as breeding in the Province and its occurrence there was unexpected.—P. A. TAVERNER, *Ottawa, Ontario, November 21, 1921.*

A Pigmy Owl Bathing.—On September 28, 1921, while camping at the easterly end of Kneeland Prairie, Humboldt County, California, in company with Mr. Chester C. Lamb, the latter came in from a trap in the woods with the report that he had seen a Coast Pigmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma grinnelli*) taking a bath. He described the bird as standing on the edge of a small cattle trough beside the trail and going through the process of ablution in about the same manner as any other bird. The trough was full to the brim and the little owl was dipping and dabbling in the water, finally shaking itself and preening its feathers. Later the bird was secured and proved to be a male still in partial moult, with few but pin-feathers on the throat.

Several ornithologists to whom I mentioned this matter said that they had never before heard of an owl bathing and had never accredited this bird with a desire for such a performance. Mr. Chase Littlejohn tells me, however, that at one time he had several Barn Owls (*Tyto pratincola*) in captivity for a short period and discovered that they were very fond of a bath. They were kept in a rather dark place to which they quickly grew accustomed, soon becoming quite tame. He used to watch them a good deal, to study their habits and attitudes, and frequently saw them bathing in a large vessel of water maintained for their use. Apparently they bathed every day; for if there were days in which he did not actually see them bathe he almost invariably noticed some sign of their having done so, either in the way of wet feathers, water on the floor, or at least some token.