

about two and one-half miles south of Piedras Blancas, Mr. Joseph Dixon and I saw a full-plumaged male Harlequin Duck diving repeatedly in the rough water among the outlying rocks about 60 yards from the brink of the low bluff where we stood. Some minutes later, the bird hauled up on the side of a rock facing the shore, where it sat some three feet above the surface of the water, preening vigorously. Its conspicuous markings, even to the chestnut of the flanks, showed plainly. Mr. Dixon took a photograph of it at 50 yards range; the image, although too small for reproduction, is there with some detail—perfectly good, permanent “evidence” of the identity of the duck (photo no. 2825, Mus. Vert. Zool.).

On October 14, we passed the place again, and this time saw a pair of Harlequin Ducks in flight above the surf, one very close behind the other, the female foremost.

There is a great extent of rough coast-line, with numerous off-shore rocks, along Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties—just such territory as the Harlequins seem to prefer when not on the inland mountain streams to which they resort during a brief period of the year for nesting. These ducks may well be present there in some numbers and yet as a rule be beyond eye-range from shore.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, June 19, 1922.*

Some New Birds for Oklahoma.—In the farthest northwestern corner of the Oklahoma panhandle, two miles from New Mexico and eight from Colorado, I found several species of birds that apparently have not been previously reported from this state. This is a region of sand-stone mesas, covered with a sparse growth of pinyons, junipers (*Juniperus monosperma*) and scrub oaks; the elevation varies from about 4600 feet in the valley where the town of Kenton is situated, to about 4800 feet on top of the surrounding mesas.

Aphelocoma woodhousei. Woodhouse Jay. Three of these birds were seen on the mesas, June 1, 1922, and two the next day. No new nests were found, but we saw a number of old ones, mere platforms of twigs, that apparently could have belonged to no other bird.

Cyanocephalus cyanocephalus. Pinyon Jay. There were three pairs of these noisy jays on the mesas June 1. My daughter Constance found one of their nests containing an egg and two newly hatched young; this was in a juniper eight feet from the ground. We saw four or five old nests in the junipers and pinyons.

Peucaea cassini. Cassin Sparrow. We saw and heard four of these exquisite songsters from May 30 to June 2; they were all in alfalfa fields about Kenton.

Pipilo fuscus mesoleucus. Canyon Towhee. Common on the sides of the mesas. We found three nests, one on June 1 and two on June 2; the first two each contained three eggs, one being in a juniper and the other in a pinyon, while the last nest was situated in a tree cactus and contained three young.

Psaltriparus plumbeus. Lead-colored Bush-tit. A pair of these little birds, and also a single individual, were seen on the mesas June 1 and 2.—MARGARET M. NICE, *Norman, Oklahoma, June 27, 1922.*

Notes from Imperial Valley.—Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus anatum*). While exploring a marsh that in proper season is a popular duck-hunting preserve, near Calipatria, I observed the following novel method of a Duck Hawk in attacking its prey. Three Shovellers had risen near the boat, and at a distance of perhaps seventy-five yards were about fifty feet above the water, when a hawk rose swiftly from concealment among the tules and fastened to the rear of the hindmost duck. The flapping of both attacker and victim carried them about fifty yards to a floating mat of tules, whence I started the hawk a few minutes later. Apparently the duck had not realized its danger, as there was no deviation in its line of flight previous to being struck. Had the hawk struck from above in true falcon style, the prey would have fallen into open water and been lost.

Verdin (*Auriparus flaviceps flaviceps*). Nests of the Verdin were numerous in mesquite-grown gullies in the above locality, among them many that were hardly more than one-third the bulk of the ordinary structure. All these small nests were unlined, with the cavity hardly big enough to hold more than one bird; and they were always

located near others of the regulation size and character. I am unable to learn that these peculiar nests have heretofore been commented upon. To my mind they are *roosting* nests, built for that exclusive purpose, possibly to shelter the male while its mate is brooding.

A mysterious crane (*Grus americana?*). The sonorous notes of cranes were heard on several occasions, always at a great height. In one instance the field-glasses showed five birds in all-dark plumage, circling round and round, in crane fashion, in company with three larger white ones with black, or dark, primaries. As memory serves me, they were identical in appearance with a similar flock seen in northern Illinois in the '80's, and which were doubtless Whooping Cranes. If these were not of that species, what were they? And if they were Whooping Cranes, why in California?

Black-and-White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*). During the past four years this species has been reported to the writer by local observers a half-dozen times or more, but these reports were never verified by actual specimens until early this last spring, when a bird was taken by Dr. L. B. Bishop near Los Angeles. Later, on April 6, I secured a male at Thermal, in Coachella Valley, feeding among the mesquites. These, I believe, are the second and third recorded captures for southern California. Mrs. L. U. Everhart, of Thermal, reported a specimen there in early March, possibly the same bird secured by me a month later. Apparently this species is becoming less rare in our region, or possibly bird students are making fewer mistakes in identifying the Black-throated Gray species.—L. E. WYMAN, *Los Angeles Museum, Los Angeles, California, June 9, 1922.*

A Unique Breeding Colony of Least Terns.—For several years a colony of Least Terns, the western form now called the Brown Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum browni*), had nested on the beach just south of the outskirts of Venice, Los Angeles County. (See Chambers, Condor, x, November, 1908, p. 237.) As this section built up, the terns had a harder and harder time of it trying to raise their young. I have found eggs within twenty feet of an occupied dwelling. Of course, with all the dogs and cats about, as well as curious children, there was not much chance for the poor birds. Finally the terns moved their breeding grounds across a canal, to the very last stretch of sand-dunes, and there nested for several years, but as the town continued to grow in population so did the tern colony decrease. When a bridge was built over the canal, that, of course, meant the end of the colony. The birds struggled along, however, till but a few were left.

On July 8, 1922, while I was hunting over the mud flats, a mile or more back from the sand-dunes, to my surprise I found that the terns had established themselves there in a most unusual sort of place for this species. It was gratifying to find them increased in numbers. They had chosen for their nesting grounds a portion of the dried-up mud flats, a little over a mile from the ocean. They will be in comparative safety there as they are in a posted gun-club preserve quite removed from dogs, cats and dwellings. Several nests were found, no nests at all really, the eggs being simply laid on the hard, dried mud. In some instances, where the mud was soft, the eggs were laid in slight depressions, scratched out by the bird and lined with a few weed stems. At this date sets of two eggs each were seen, but I did not ascertain the stage of incubation. I found two young birds just out of the eggs, one of the usual coloration, the other a light buffy bird. It looked almost yellow beside its nest mate.

The mud on which the birds were nesting, when wet, is of the most tenacious character. On the beaks of the nestlings there were masses of dried mud, accumulated, I suppose, when their bills got wet in being fed by their parents. I cleaned their bills but have been wondering if the mud would interfere with their successful rearing. A nesting site other than sand is a novelty in the life history of the Least Tern. I have seen most of their breeding colonies in southern California and they were all on the sandy beaches a short distance above high tide, or more rarely among the sand-dunes.—CHESTER C. LAMB, *Los Angeles, California, July 8, 1922.*

The Southward Range of the Santa Cruz Chickadee.—The southernmost place whence *Penthestes rufescens bartowi* has been recorded heretofore is near the mouth of the Little Sur River, Monterey County (Grinnell, Auk, xxi, 1904, p. 367; Jenkins, Condor, viii, 1906, p. 129). Coniferous forest growths of the humid coast type, such as are