

was located. At least eight or ten birds were seen, apparently well established, the males in full song, reminding one of a June day in the clover fields of the East. At least one specimen was taken, and now bears this data: "*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*, male, Lake Malheur, Oregon. Collected and mounted by W. T. Shaw." This specimen is now in the Oregon Agricultural College collection.—WILLIAM T. SHAW, Pullman, Washington, January 10, 1923.

Band-tailed Pigeons Increasing in California.—Until May, 1922, I had for some years seen only occasional Wild or Band-tailed pigeons (*Columba fasciata*). About May 30, 1922, however, during a trip along the coast north of the Russian River and in the vicinity of Fort Ross, I saw one morning seven flocks; the smallest flock numbered ten, the largest flock, from thirty to thirty-five pigeons.

Toward the end of November, 1922, in Pasadena, near the residence of Mrs. Howard Huntington, I saw two large flocks on several successive days. There were possibly 125 pigeons all told, and they were resting in some large eucalyptus and sycamore trees in a canyon below the house.

January 5, 1923, in Bollinger Canyon, Contra Costa County, back of San Ramon, I saw two flocks, one of about twenty, the other of about seventy-five pigeons. They seemed to be feeding on toyon (red) berries.

January 13, 1923, near Jolon, Monterey County, I saw probably three hundred pigeons, scattered over a territory about a mile square. January 15, 1923, at the same place, I saw one flock of 200 to 250 birds. They were feeding on acorns and were probably a gathering of the scattered birds seen on the 13th.

January 20, 1923, near Ojai, Ventura County, I saw several flocks. One flock, feeding in a grain field, numbered from three to five hundred—nearer five hundred.

January 25, 1923, I was again in Pasadena, and the canyon near Mrs. Huntington's house was full of pigeons flying around and alighting in the high trees near by. When they flew they made a loud, quite noticeable, flapping noise. I do not think that there was one less than 500. Mrs. Huntington told me that the pigeons had been there since I first saw them, in November, 1922, and in larger numbers. They were evidently using this canyon for a resting place, and going out to some other place to feed. They were so numerous that they were exciting much local attention.—ALLEN L. CHICKERING, San Francisco, California, February 1, 1923.

The English Blackbird in California.—For a number of years there has reposed in the collection of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology a dark plumaged thrush which was thought by some people to be merely a melanistic example of the Western Robin. In fact, the writer had so accepted the bird, and had used it on two or three occasions in demonstrating color abnormalities to classes in vertebrate zoology, contrasting it with an almost complete albino Robin of undoubted identity. But a recent critical study, made at the suggestion of Mr. H. S. Swarth, showed that the bird was not a Western Robin at all. On the presumption that the bird in question was an individual which had strayed out of its normal path of migration, the descriptions and illustrations of dark-colored thrushes in Central America and eastern Asia contained in Seebohm's Monograph of the Turdidae were examined, but without revealing any species with which the specimen in hand might be linked. The bird was then submitted to Dr. Charles W. Richmond for comparison with the National Museum material and he identified it as a female English Blackbird, *Planesticus merula* (Linnaeus).

The specimen in question was collected by F. O. Johnson at Oakland, California, on December 6, 1891. It came with the rest of the Johnson collection to the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology and is now number 10688 of the bird collection. In an article published soon after its capture (Zoe, III, 1892, pp. 115-116), Johnson described the bird, identifying it as a melanistic Robin (*Merula migratoria propinqua*). He also gave the circumstances of capture and these are worth quoting in the present connection.

" . . . While pursuing a Townsend's sparrow which had flown to the top of a tall growth of jasmine, I noticed on the opposite side of the bush a strange bird moping in the shade. It observed me just as I saw it, and hopped sluggishly to another branch