

Mr. Charles A. Upner (Auk, xxxviii, p. 459) has remarked this concerning the Wood Pewee note, and has suggested that the similarity is a coincidence and not an imitation.

Having been acquainted with the Starling in America since 1902, I doubt the coincidence, and believe that the Wood Pewee note originated as an imitation. The first Starlings that I knew at New Haven, Connecticut, between 1902 and 1908 did not, to my knowledge, sing this note. Returning to the region in 1913, after an absence of five years, I found the note commonly used by them.

It is my belief that this Wood Pewee note and other imitations are handed on from parent to offspring not by inheritance, but by imitation of the parent by the offspring. In the days when the number of individual Starlings in America was still small, one or more birds learned from the Wood Pewee its plaintive three-note song *pee-a-wee*. Since then new generations of Starlings have learned this note mainly from their parents, not from the Wood Pewee. The fact that the Starling is increasing in numbers, that a majority of its young live to maturity, has fixed the Wood Pewee note in the Starling's vocabulary so securely that it seems to be one of its own notes and not an imitation.

This seems to be true also, to a lesser extent, with the notes of the Bluebird, Grackle, Chickadee, and Cowbird. All these notes are much commoner with Starlings than are any imitative notes in the songs of the two native imitators of this region, the Catbird and Brown Thrasher. The fact that the Wood Pewee sings two two-note songs also, "pee-ah" and "ah-wee" and that these have not, to my knowledge, been acquired by the Starling seems to point to the correctness of my conclusions, though this might also be taken as evidence that Mr. Upner's suggestion concerning the Wood Pewee note is right.—ARETAS A. SAUNDERS, *Fairfield, Connecticut, December 8, 1922.*

Some Late Occurrences of the Barn Swallow in Southern California.—The tens of thousands of swallows of several species which congregated about Buena Vista Lake, Kern County, California, in the late summer following the breeding season and during the fall migrations in 1922 reached the peak of numbers about the first of October. The species present are named in the order of abundance.

Tree Swallow (*Iridoprocne bicolor*); Barn Swallow (*Hirundo erythrogaster*); Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon lunifrons lunifrons*); Rough-winged Swallow (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*); Violet-green Swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina lepida*); and Bank Swallow (*Riparia riparia*).

After October 1, a daily decrease was noticeable until by the 15th practically everything except Tree Swallows (which winter commonly in the locality) had passed on. Cliff Swallows were seen on October 12 in fair numbers. They had almost disappeared on October 13, and the three that were noted positively on that date were not collected. The Barn Swallows remained a few days longer. About two hundred scattered birds were seen on October 13, and one specimen taken. As late as October 16, three were seen, none of which was secured. They all passed close overhead, but at inconvenient moments when no gun was at hand.

On November 3, 1921, on the marsh at Anaheim Landing, Orange County, California, a trio of Barn Swallows was seen flying south. They passed over at such short range that there could be little chance of a mistake in the identity.—A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *Pasadena, California, December 21, 1922.*

Unusual Shelter of Some Hepburn Leucostictes in Winter.—Mr. Luther J. Goldman, Predatory Animal Inspector, United States Biological Survey, has sent in the following observation from Washington State:

"On January 10, 1918, I observed a flock of Leucostictes fluttering about a cliff overhanging the banks of the Snake River, near Alpowa, southeastern Whitman County, Washington. On closer approach, I found they had taken shelter from the raw wintry wind in the deserted mud nests of a colony of cliff swallows. As I watched them a part of the flock flew to a nearby hillside, fed about for a few minutes and returned to the cliff, and, clinging for a moment to small sharp projections, they one by one dis-