

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 wintery 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-

appeared into the mud nests, some turning about to peer out curiously and quite fearlessly. There were probably fifty birds in the flock."

Specimens collected by Mr. Goldman are the Hepburn Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis littoralis*).—WALTER P. TAYLOR, *U. S. Biological Survey, La Jolla, California, September 14, 1922.*

The European Widgeon in Oregon.—On November 27, 1922, while collecting birds at Netarts Bay, Tillamook County, Oregon, I took a male European Widgeon (*Mareca penelope*). So far as I know, this species has not previously been recorded from Oregon.—ALEX. WALKER, *Blaine, Oregon, January 19, 1923.*

Chickadees Resting in a Robin's Nest.—On the afternoon of August 11, 1922, I arrived at a spot on the Yuba River about four miles above Cisco, Placer County, California. While making camp I noticed an abandoned nest of the Western Robin in the top of a young lodge-pole pine, about ten feet from the ground. The tree stood about thirty feet from the tent.

That evening while eating late, when all diurnal mammals and nearly all birds had retired, I heard the subdued but distinct call of the Mountain Chickadee (*Penthestes gambeli*) near by. On hearing the second call, I looked in that direction just in time to see the fluffy form of the bird slip into the Robin's nest. Glancing at my watch I noticed it was just three minutes past seven. I walked over and gently tugged at the tree, whereupon the bird appeared on the edge of the nest, glanced about for six or eight seconds and dropped back out of sight. The next morning I was awakened at exactly five o'clock by a chickadee singing from a branch not over four feet above my head. He continued for three or four minutes and then disappeared. Each night and morning, with one exception, this routine was repeated with mechanical regularity until I left on August 19. The exception was on the 14th. I was watching for the bird to appear, and at three minutes past seven it had not yet arrived; nor had it come at four minutes past seven; but at exactly five minutes after seven it came skipping through the branches by the usual route and quickly hopped into the nest without stopping for the usual evening song!

Each evening I aroused the bird by gently shaking the tree and each successive time it required more shaking to induce him to appear until, on the last night (August 18), I was compelled to give the tree several rather vigorous jerks before he appeared on the edge of the nest. And correspondingly, each successive time he remained in view a shorter period of time, until on the last night he merely appeared, turned about, and hopped back. The arrivals and departures were always by the same route, that is, the tree over the tent.—FRANK N. BASSETT, *Alameda, California, January 17, 1923.*

Mockingbird in Humboldt County, California.—Early in the winter of 1922, Mrs. Ida Varley, of Ferndale, Humboldt County, California, heard the unmistakable song of the Western Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*) from her roof top. Going out to see this unheard-of bird in this locality, she watched him as he perched on the roof, singing softly, as though not feeling quite at home. He remained about the place for several hours, but did not sing again. After a few days of apparent absence, he reappeared, and has remained in the vicinity of Mrs. Varley's home—making visits also to the grounds of near neighbors—at least up to December 27, when the writer saw him there, and observed him for several hours.

The bird is alone so far as any other of his species is concerned, and the birds of other local species regard him as an alien, his appearance in any bush or tree being a signal for every other bird to depart at once. He feeds on the scarlet fruits of the cotoneaster and hawthorn. Since the first song, he has not been heard to sing again.

There is no possibility of mistake as to the identity of this bird, the writer having had a familiar acquaintance with the Mockingbird for twenty-five years in southern California. Mrs. Varley also has known the species for many years in the central part of the state.—CHARLOTTE M. WILDER, *Carlotta, California, January 13, 1923.*