

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

American Redstart in Los Angeles.—While in Griffith Park the afternoon of September 13, 1923, near the Western Avenue picnic grounds, my eye was caught by a flash of black wings with brilliant orange patches as a bird flew into the top of a nearby oak. I immediately followed this up, and, never having seen anything like it before, I hurriedly jotted down the following notes as I observed the bird. "Above, all black with bright orange patch on wings and rump or tail. Below, throat and breast black with orange patch at side of breast. Belly white. Size and actions of Warbler." On consulting Bailey and Chapman, I could find nothing that at all fitted this description except the male American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*), and as the distinctive coloration and markings are so striking, it would seem that there can be no doubt as to its identification.

The Redstart was also seen by Miss J. A. Potter, who was with me at the time. The following day Mrs. G. H. Schneider made a trip to the same location, hoping the bird might still be there, and was equally fortunate in seeing this rare visitor.—MRS. ELLA H. ELLIS, *Los Angeles, September 20, 1923.*

Breeding Condition of the Murres on the Farallones in June, 1923.—A surprising feature of my visit to the Farallon Islands on June 8 was the small number of California Murres (*Uria troille californica*) which were seen breeding. While it was not possible to get over all of the main island during the time at my disposal, it was clear that breeding murres were present in numbers to be measured in tens as against the presence of breeding cormorants in hundreds and gulls in thousands. Only three small groups of murres were actually seen to be breeding; in each case they had laid their eggs in crevices large enough to accommodate from seven to fifteen birds. Whether my visit was made before most of the murres had begun to lay, or whether their breeding numbers have been reduced to this extent, it is not possible to determine from this single observation. At any rate the breeding season appeared to be advanced for many of the other species, especially for the cormorants and gulls, whose nests in most cases were occupied by young birds. The occurrence of several hundred murres on the water and in the air between the Islands and San Francisco favored the supposition that they had not yet commenced to breed.

According to the lighthouse keeper, the small number of nesting murres become discouraged, after one or two attempts at nesting, because of the attacks of the gulls. I, myself, saw no actual case of interference on the part of the gulls with the nesting of other birds. This was due, no doubt, to the fact that I kept on the edges of the large breeding colonies, with the result that few of the brooding birds left their nests. The selection by the murres of crevices in the rocks as breeding places suggests that they have felt the need for protection. It seems probable, therefore, that the small number of breeding murres is indeed to be largely charged to interference by the gulls, whose numbers are said to be greatly on the increase.—RALPH W. CHANEY, *Berkeley, California, September 27, 1923.*

Woodpeckers, Pecan Nuts, and Squirrels.—In connection with some recent discussions upon the storing of acorns by the California Woodpecker (*Melanerpes formicivorus bairdi*), the following account given to me by Mr. J. A. Graves, President of the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank of Los Angeles, may be of interest.

Mr. Graves has an orange orchard near Alhambra, not far from Los Angeles. On the property there are, also, a few pecan trees and a redwood tree, the latter being 37 years old, with a diameter near the base of about four feet and a height of from 75 to 100 feet. Three years ago California Woodpeckers stored in this redwood tree hundreds of pecan nuts, duly fitted into the bark, as is the custom of this species of woodpecker.

It happens that there are a good many gray squirrels in the vicinity, and the sharp-eyed little animals soon discovered the store of nuts in this newly filled warehouse and promptly removed each and every nut for their own special use.