present; but I saw as many as a dozen, including the young. As I had collected a bird just south of this point, and since this is a fitting nesting place, it is probable that the birds have nested there in previous years. The strange part is that they have not been observed in migration, farther south, in western Texas. An observer who was not looking for grackles could easily have passed by in an automobile without detecting them, with the redwings and other birds, just as I came near doing although I was on the lookout for them at the time.—J. STOKLEY LIGON, *Ft. Stockton, Texas, October 7, 1925.*

**Scarcity of Certain Australian Birds.**—The fact that some Australian birds are becoming increasingly scarce has given concern to our ornithologists, and special efforts are being made to find out the reasons. The main factors are no doubt settlement of the country and the introduction of the rabbit, fox and cat; for it can be noted that only ground birds are affected. One species that only diligent search can find is the Black-throated Coach-whip Bird (*Psophodes nigrigularis*). This species has a comparatively small range in southwestern Australia, inhabiting dense brush where it is probably safe from introduced enemies; but the settlers destroy its habitat by fire in order to clear the land for more useful herbage. *Atrichornis clamosa,* inhabiting the same districts and something of the same class of country, but with a more restricted habitat, is seemingly even more scarce, and may be extinct. This bird draws attention to its whereabouts by its song, and has likely been an easy prey to *Felis domestica.*

Some of our ground parrots, which forty years ago were very numerous, are now reported only occasionally, and this scarcity extends, not only over settled districts, but also to uninhabited country. The Scarlet-shouldered Parrot (*Psephotus pulcherrimus*) is now apparently confined to one small district. It would seem that its habit of nesting in ant hills, in a position exposed to enemies, has been the cause of its undoing, for practically all its habitat is settled. Other birds of the same genus, and much the same habits, but nesting in trees, are as numerous as ever they were in settled districts. Grass parrots of the genus *Neophema,* quiet and retiring little birds, were the first to go before advancing occupation of the land by sheep and cattle. The habitat of some species, however, extends into the uninhabited wilds, but even here it would seem that the alteration of the herbage by the introduced rabbit has had its effect. The Ground Parrots (*Pezoporus* and *Geopsittacus*), entirely terrestial in their habits, are now, as far as we can ascertain, only found in a few restricted localities, though they may be holding their own in parts of the interior.

The great majority of our birds, however, are not affected by any delimiting factor, and are still extremely numerous. Even in our cities many indigenous species accept the changed conditions without any difficulty or protest. In this we are very fortunate, for it is a great pleasure to have the wild birds give us their confidence, thus adding to the interest of our parks and gardens.—A. S. LE SOUEF, *Taronga Zoological Park, Sydney, Australia, December 2, 1925.*

**Lesser Yellow-legs in Western Oregon.**—On September 10, 1925, I took at Tillamook, Tillamook County, Oregon, one of three Lesser Yellow-legs (*Totanus flavipes*). Mr. S. G. Jewett has kindly given me the following previously published records for the state: Abundant at Malheur Lake during migration (Bendire, Proc. Boston Soc. Nat. Hist., vol. 19, 1877, p. 141); specimen taken July 10, 1899, near Corvallis (Woodcock, Birds of Oregon, 1902, p. 20); seen at Malheur Lake, August 18 and 24 (Willett, Condor, XXI, 1919, p. 202).

Three Greater Yellow-legs (*Totanus melanoleucus*) which were present in the same slough were pursuing small fish by running rapidly through the shallow water, keeping the bill and so much of the head under water that a thin silvery wave was constantly breaking over their heads.—RALPH HOFFMANN, *Carpinteria, California, November 14, 1925.*

**A Prolific Anthony Green Heron.**—On June 5, 1913, Mrs. May Canfield and Walter Mackinon, while searching for birds' nests along the Sweetwater River at Bonita, San Diego County, came upon the nest of an Anthony Green Heron (*Butorides virescens anthonyi*) about fifteen feet above the ground in a willow tree. Investigation revealed

five half-grown young. The place was not visited again that year, but early the following season the old heron's nest was found to be still in a fair state of preservation. Several visits were paid to the nest during the rest of that season, but it was never occupied, nor was an Anthony Green Heron seen in the vicinity.

On April 27, 1915, Mackinon found a heron sitting on the nest. Climbing a nearby tree for a point of vantage, he flushed the bird and found that the nest was empty. In the meantime I returned from an expedition elsewhere and, hearing of the return of the heron, drove out to Bonita on May 11, 1915, with Mrs. Canfield and Mackinon. When we were directly beneath the nest, the old bird flushed and, through the thin platform of sticks, there could be seen the blue of many eggs. No time was lost in climbing the tree and, to our astonishment, we found that the nest contained eight eggs. These we collected, together with the nest.

Apparently this did not discourage the herons, for, about ten days later, Mrs. Canfield and Mackinon flushed presumably the same bird from a new nest, situated at

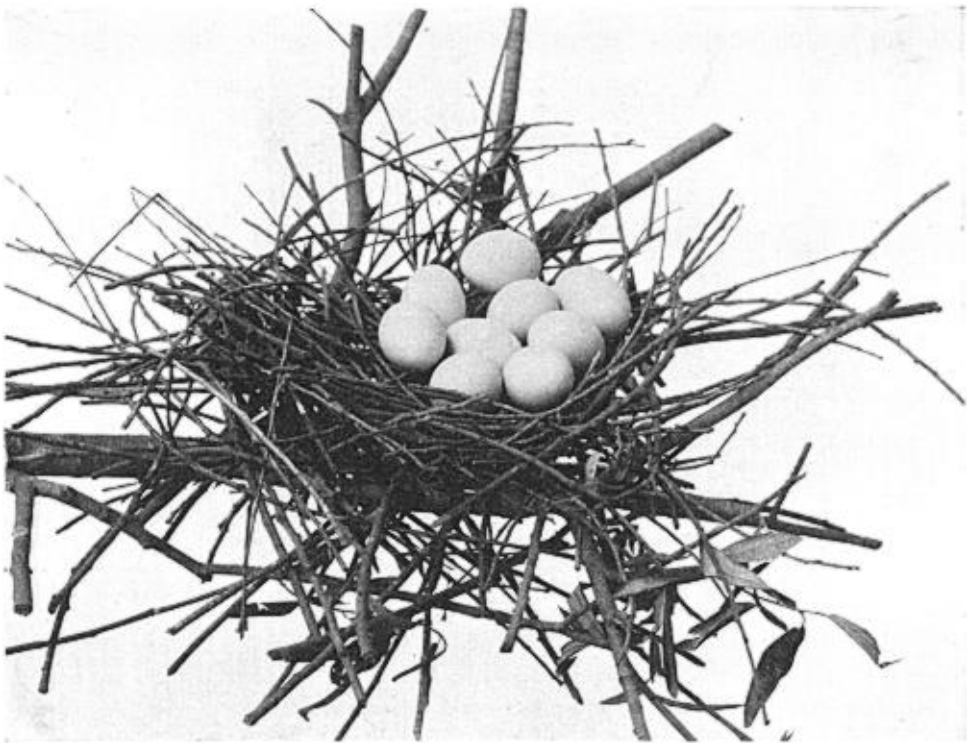

Fig. 31. SET OF NINE EGGS OF ANTHONY GREEN HERON.

about the same elevation as the old one and only about a hundred and fifty yards away. The structure of the nest permitted observation of the contents without climbing, and it was evidently empty.

Later on our party was joined by Donald R. Dickey of Pasadena, who was then making photographic studies of birds and their nests in the interest of W. L. Dawson's "Birds of California". On May 30, 1915, we all went out to Bonita to look over various nests we had previously located and to see how the herons were getting along. As we approached the nest, the old bird flopped off with a squawk. The nest seemed overloaded! A careful survey of the slender trees surrounding the site gave us little hope of getting safely to the nest, so we went to a nearby packing house and borrowed a "picking ladder", a self-supporting, tripod-like arrangement. With this we were able to reach the nest.

We had agreed that should the nest contain eight eggs or less it was to go to Mr. Dickey, as the species was new to his collection. He mounted the ladder but, a moment after gently reaching over the edge of the nest, he descended empty-handed, exclaiming that there were "almost a full dozen if not more". I climbed up and counted nine fresh, blue eggs into my hat—a find to brighten the eye of any oologist, even though his hair be gray or his shoulders bent. So the set of eight with nest taken on May 11 was presented to Mr. Dickey, while I retained the set of nine and nest taken on May 30.

The measurements in millimeters of the two sets are as follows:

May 11 set: 40 x 29, 40 x 29, 39 x 29.2, 37.3 x 30, 39 x 28.2, 37 x 29.6, 37.4 x 29, 37 x 29.3.

May 30 set: 42 x 29.8, 41 x 29.2, 40.5 x 29.8, 40 x 30, 40 x 30, 40 x 30, 38 x 30, 37 x 29.7, 37 x 29.7.

The variation in size of the eggs might seem to be evidence enough for accusing the male of polygamy. Yet no one observed more than one female at either of the nests, and it would hardly seem possible that he could move multiple spouses from one nest to another and induce them to repeat operations. It has been my experience, and that of others, to find Anthony Green Herons in scattered pairs through the willow bottoms and never common. I know of no record of their laying in each other's nests.

During the winter of 1915-16, torrential floods tore out all the trees in this locality, even washing away a large concrete bridge, and caused the herons to seek other nesting sites. So my acquaintance with this pair ended, and although the facts here stated occurred some ten years ago, I have felt they might be worthy of permanent record.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *Natural History Museum, San Diego, California, February 11, 1925.*

**The Western Meadowlark in Northern British Columbia.**—An occasional meadowlark pushes northward in spring far beyond the regular range. Such a one was taken by the writer in a field at Fort Simpson on the Mackenzie, in latitude 62°, in the spring of 1904 (North American Fauna, no. 27, 1908, p. 410). It was with a feeling of surprise, however, that I learned of the presence in summer of the Western Meadowlark (*Sturnella neglecta*) in the Hudsonian Zone valleys of certain of the upper tributaries of the Stikine, in northern British Columbia.

In the late summer of 1910, in company with George Mixter, of Boston, Massachusetts, and Dan Brown, of Telegraph Creek, British Columbia, the writer crossed British Columbia from the Stikine to the Peace. Though most of the country we passed through was unknown to our entire party, we traveled a few miles up one of the southerly head tributaries of the Stikine, the Ispatseeza, with the valley of which, a few miles father north of our position, Mr. Brown was familiar. He had spent several seasons among the mountains of central British Columbia, was a keen observer, and as his youth had been spent in the western states was familiar with most of our common western species of birds and mammals. My interest in the bird life led him to tell me, among other notes of interest, of observing a number of meadowlarks in this valley during a previous summer. Several different birds were seen, singing as if on their nesting grounds, and under such circumstances that it seemed reasonable to believe that they were breeding, although no nests or young were actually seen. Mr. Brown's experience and undoubted familiarity with the species, and his general trustworthiness as an observer, lead me to place implicit faith in his narrative and to put the observation on record.

Although one has difficulty in picturing the meadowlark as a summer inhabitant of Hudsonian Zone valleys tenanted by breeding willow ptarmigans and golden-crowned sparrows, yet from the standpoint of one on the ground, the surroundings seem not necessarily uncongenial. During June and July, owing to the long hours of sunlight, the days are warm, often hot, and the nights are too short to become very cool. Herbaceous vegetation, with its accompanying insect life, is abundant, and there would seem to be no insuperable obstacle to the breeding of a comparatively hardy bird like the meadowlark, any more than in the case of the Western Chipping Sparrow, whose nests were found within a few miles.—EDWARD A. PREBLE, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., January 18, 1926.*