

removed by similar prying from the shell. When the body is freed, it is placed upon the rock. The young bird then immediately grabs it. Sometimes, however, the morsel is taken directly from the bill of the adult.

This process was repeated indefinitely at the rate of about two limpets per minute.—LAIDLAW WILLIAMS, *Carmel, California, November 9, 1926.*

Curious Perching Behavior of English Sparrow.—The concrete sections of the Oakland-Alameda Estuary tubes are being constructed in the dry dock at Hunter's Point in San Francisco. These are circular in cross section and are covered with a layer of waterproofing, and then sheathed with planks.

While walking along beside one of these sections I saw a male English Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) alight on the side of the tube, clinging there with his claws and bracing himself with his tail in a manner very similar to a Woodpecker. His tail was spread out like a fan beneath him, and he was pecking into a crack between two boards. I could not find out what he was after, though I am sure there was no food there, as the boards had only been in place a few days and were in a position on the horizontal diameter of the tube, where it would be almost impossible for food to lodge.—ERNEST D. CLABAUGH, *Berkeley, California, October 17, 1926.*

Western Mockingbird in Contra Costa County.—Whenever one who has lived in the East is told that there is a "Catbird" at some accessible place in northern California, there is at once renewed an interest in a noisy old friend and a faint hope is raised that he may actually find one of these rare birds. In such a frame of mind I went looking about for a "Catbird" among some Valley Oak trees about three-quarters of a mile east of Walnut Creek in the afternoon of November 21, 1926—to find the usual thing, a Western Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*). But considering that even this species is not at all common in the Bay region, its presence may be worth recording, although only a sight identification. I did not hear this bird utter a sound, but my friend's account of its vocal activities fortified my opinion, based on sight. He had seen the same bird in the same locality repeatedly and had heard its mimetic utterances. The bird had no dark rufous coloration under the tail and *did* have the white markings of our Western Mockingbird, which it certainly was.—CLAUDE GIGNOUX, *73 The Tunnel Road, Berkeley, California, November 22, 1926.*

Designation of a Pacific Coast Subspecies of Chipping Sparrow.—For many years, since at least as long ago as 1901 (see Ridgway, *Birds N. and Mid. Amer.*, pt. I, p. 316), systematic students have known that the Chipping Sparrow of the United States as a species is represented by three north-south racial sections, the eastern *Spizella passerina passerina*, the Rocky Mountain *S. p. arizonae*, and an unnamed Pacific Coast race—just as with many another moderately plastic bird. Apparently following the lead of Ridgway, who remarks (*loc. cit.*) "I hesitate to separate them" (that is, the Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain forms, to both of which together he applies the name *arizonae*), no one to this day has ventured to name the westernmost race. I see no good reason for delaying longer; therefore:

Spizella passerina stridula, new subspecies. Pacific Chipping Sparrow.

Type locality and type.—Pasadena, Los Angeles County, California; male, probably more than one year old, because of its solidly chestnut crown; no. 35320, Mus. Vert. Zool.; collected March 28, 1896, by J. Grinnell; orig. no. 765.

Diagnosis.—Resembles *Spizella passerina arizonae* Coues, of Arizona and the Rocky Mountain region generally, but wing and tail averaging slightly shorter, and general tone of light areas not so pale: hind neck and rump darker gray, ground-color of dorsum clay color rather than cinnamon-buff [of Ridgway's Color Standards, 1912], and whole lower surface not so white save on throat, but more pervaded with gray of a faintly buffy tone; resembles *Spizella passerina passerina* (Bechstein), of the eastern United States, closely in dimensions and tone of under surface, but tone of coloration lighter, as follows: hind neck and rump less deeply gray, dorsum and occiput more narrowly black streaked, ground-color of dorsum clay color rather than dull tawny, and edgings on closed wing decidedly paler.

Measurements.—Average of 10 winter and early spring males of *stridula*, from the Pacific slope of Los Angeles County, California: wing 70.4 mm., tail 59.0; of 10