

Each of these years a nest was found at the same locality by Harry Benbough, a member of a boys' bird club conducted by Mr. Stillman. For fear that the birds might be disturbed, Mr. Stillman prefers that the exact site be not made public, beyond the fact that it is on a falling stream of water in the Cleveland National Forest at about 3500 feet elevation. The first nest, discovered in August, 1925, was on a rock about three feet from the falls. The moss of the nest had been kept green by the spray which touched it. Two Dippers were observed on the rocks below, but the nest was not examined. On June 20, 1926, the second nest was found on a ledge under a large rock about twenty feet from the falls and five feet from the stream. It contained four full-fledged young. On June 27, 1926, Mr. Stillman, Harry Benbough and George Smith collected the empty nest, which has been presented, with full data, to the Natural History Museum.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *Natural History Museum, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, September 21, 1926.*

The Water-Thrush (*Seiurus noveboracensis*) the Initial Species in the Autumnal Migration through Costa Rica.—This species was seen on August 12, 1926, beside a puddle in an old logging road near Iberria Farm, at the north base of the Volcano Turialba, and again near-by a few days later. It had been first to arrive on several preceding years, and I suspect that it is the leader of the North American avian host in this part of Central America every fall. True, Broad-winged Hawks and Solitary Sandpipers can now and then be seen here in Costa Rica every month in the year; but I judge this sufficient proof to exclude such individuals from migratory status.—AUSTIN SMITH, *San José, Costa Rica, September 7, 1926.*

Nesting of the Sandhill Crane in Modoc County, California.—On May 6, 1926, a Mr. Christensen showed me the nest of a Sandhill Crane (*Grus mexicana*) on his ranch about twenty miles from Alturas. The nest was in a small patch of tules (*Scirpus*) in a wet meadow. When we approached the nest, the female (?) rose, disclosing two eggs, and flew to the meadow a short distance off. The male (?) rose from the tules and joined her. We followed and the two birds walked ahead of us, making no sound till they were about half a mile from the nest, when they began to "cronk". The nest was made of dead tule stems, was about five feet in diameter at the base, and the central portion, built up so that the eggs were about one foot above water, was about two feet across and almost flat. Mr. Christensen had flushed the female from the nest about ten days before, when she was already incubating two eggs.

Mr. Joseph Mailliard (Condor, xxvi, 1924, p. 216) has recorded the finding of a nest and of a half-grown young in Surprise Valley in 1924. With this exception, there seems to be no definite record of the nesting of the species in California since 1878 (see *Game Birds of California*, p. 621).—RALPH HOFFMANN, *Carpinteria, California, January 1, 1927.*

Additional Records of the Prairie Falcon in the Willamette Valley, Oregon.—On October 16, 1926, while examining a number of birds and mammals in the collection of Mr. Elmer A. Griepentrog, Salem, Oregon, I observed two mounted Prairie Falcons (*Falco mexicanus*). Mr. Griepentrog informs me that these were taken near Salem, one on November 16, 1924, and the other on December 23, 1925, and he has also given me the following additional notes on this species. On November 10, 1926, two Prairie Falcons were seen and one secured. This specimen was mounted and is now in the Griepentrog collection. On November 16, 1926, two were noted flying overhead and one was seen in an attempt to kill a male Ring-neck Pheasant, which, at each attack from the falcon, would flatten itself against the ground. Another falcon was found dead on November 28, 1926, but was so decomposed that it could not be preserved as a specimen. It would seem that the Prairie Falcon may at times be a more common species in the Willamette Valley than the published records of its occurrence in that region would indicate.—ALEX. WALKER, *Tillamook, Oregon, December 24, 1926.*

***Atthis heloisa morcomi* Ridgway, Not a Valid Subspecies.**—*Atthis morcomi* was described by Ridgway (Auk, xv, October, 1898, p. 325) from two females collected at Ramsey Cañon, Huachuca Mountains, southern Arizona, in July, 1896. As far as I

know, no male has ever been taken in Arizona. The authorities of the National Museum have kindly lent me the type, now no. 153886, U. S. National Museum; and, through the kindness of Mr. Joseph Grinnell, the other specimen, now no. 10299, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, is also before me.

The series of *Atthis heloisa heloisa* in the Museum of Comparative Zoology and in the collection of John E. Thayer, number, together, forty-one skins, and they include specimens from Vera Cruz, Nuevo Leon, San Luis Potosi and Tamaulipas. Of these, thirty-two are adult males, five are immature males, but unfortunately only four are females.

The characters given by Ridgway in "The Birds of North and Middle America" (Part v, 1911, p. 595), to distinguish the female of *morcomi* from that of the wide-ranging Mexican *A. heloisa heloisa*, are: "smaller (except bill); paler below with bronzy spots on chin and throat much smaller, sides less extensively cinnamon rufous, and under tail coverts pure white." In his original description of the form, Ridgway said that the second specimen had the under tail coverts more cinnamomeous than in the type, and the spots on the throat still smaller.

The Arizona specimens are not small, nor have they larger bills; Ridgway's own measurements show this. All the color characters claimed for the form fall within the range of individual variation shown by even so small a series as four females of *heloisa*, except that one Arizona bird, no. 10299 Mus. Vert. Zool., has smaller spots on the middle throat and chin than in any of the other specimens examined.

One adult female, no. 28285, coll. John E. Thayer, from Alvarez, San Luis Potosi, taken August 6, 1926, by W. W. Brown, exactly matches the type of *morcomi* in every respect, having very small spots on the chin and throat, being very pale below with little cinnamon on sides, and having white under tail coverts. Two other Mexican females have large spots on the chin and throat, are much suffused with cinnamon below, and have cinnamomeous under tail coverts. A fourth is intermediate. Young males are all nearer the dark females with heavy spotting on the throat.

The other Arizona specimen, no. 10299 Mus. Vert. Zool., is not pale below, but has the sides and under tail coverts quite as strongly cinnamomeous as in the darker Mexican birds. The bronzy spots on the sides of the neck are large, but in front on the chin and throat the spots are very small—mere dots.

Thus: there is no difference in size between *heloisa* and *morcomi*; the color of the under parts and under tail coverts is equally variable in both and is not diagnostic; the spotting of the throat, whether large or small, is also variable and probably dependent upon age, the females with small spots representing the fully adult plumage, and the heavily spotted birds being immature.

This bird is not of regular occurrence in southern Arizona, and the two or three individuals that have been taken there are in all probability mere stragglers from the very wide-spread range in Mexico, of *heloisa*.

Under the circumstances I can see no course but to relegate *morcomi* to synonymy, and to recognize the bird that occasionally occurs in Arizona as *Atthis heloisa heloisa* (Lesson and Delattre).—OUTRAM BANGS, *Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, January 27, 1927.*

Fearlessness of Shearwaters.—The Sooty Shearwater was rather commonly seen close in at Hermosa Beach during the spring and summer months of 1926. Although I have been at Hermosa during August for some years past I have never before noticed this bird. However, the most interesting fact was that on walking along the beach, especially early in the morning after a high tide, one would almost invariably find on the strand from six to ten bodies of the Sooty (*Puffinus griseus*) and usually two or three of the Black-vented Shearwater (*Puffinus opisthomelas*). These bodies were rather bedraggled and in some cases the necks were twisted; none was covered with oil. I could do no more than speculate at the reason for the death of so many of these birds.

Being much interested in fishing, I went often to the barge which was anchored about half a mile off-shore. This offered opportunities to study various species of water birds. On about half of the ten or twelve trips which I made to the barge the shearwaters were quite abundant. They nearly all came about the barge for the purpose of feeding on the refuse and bait thrown away; their audacity was surprising. In many cases the birds would come up to the very edge of the boat and dive eagerly