

NOTES ON SOME BIRDS OF THE SOUTHERN EXTREMITY OF
LOWER CALIFORNIA

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THE REGION under consideration in this paper is all that part of the Lower Californian peninsula south of an imaginary line connecting Todos Santos on the Pacific Ocean with La Paz on the Gulf of California. During nearly two years residence in different parts of the Cape region, the present writer observed some 225 species of birds, and of that number, forty seemed so rare, or have been reported upon so meagerly, that it will likely be of interest to others for me to record them.

John Xantus was the first naturalist to visit the Cape region, followed by Lyman Belding and Walter Bryant. William Brewster (Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., XLI, 1902) has given us the most extensive report upon the birds of this region, summing up the writings of all the previous naturalists in combination with the observations of his own collector, M. Abbott Frazar. I have taken Brewster's statements as the main basis for selecting the seemingly new matter now presented.

Colymbus dominicus brachypterus. Mexican Grebe. Has been reported as occurring formerly at Santiago, Miraflores, and San José del Cabo. I saw no place suitable for this grebe at Miraflores, and at Santiago the lagoon was washed away by a flood several years ago. At San José del Cabo it was seen by me only on one occasion, February 10, 1923, when two females were secured. These are now nos. 1257 and 1258 in the collection of Mr. R. M. Barnes of Lacon, Illinois.

Podilymbus podiceps. Pied-billed Grebe. Not seen at La Paz, but a few were seen both at San José del Cabo and Todos Santos, where it is a resident. I saw small young at each of these places, thus establishing the species as a breeding bird. An adult female taken at Todos Santos, July 19, 1924, is now no. 37306 in the collection of Dr. Louis B. Bishop of Pasadena, California.

Gavia pacifica. Pacific Loon. This bird has not previously been reported from the Cape region. In the last half of February and during the month of March, I found it abundant in La Paz Bay and along the coast. Boys frequently caught the birds with hook and line from the wharf. An immature male taken February 22, 1924, is now no. 2873 in the Barnes collection.

Hydroprogne caspia imperator. Caspian Tern. Not a common bird. A few seen in winter and spring both at La Paz and San José del Cabo. An adult male taken at the latter place, April 3, 1923, is now no. 1561 in the Barnes collection.

Sterna forsteri. Forster Tern. Common during the winter at San José del Cabo and in La Paz Bay. An immature female taken at the latter place September 17, 1923, is now no. 2115 in my own collection.

Sterna hirundo. Common Tern. Seen commonly during the winter about La Paz and Espiritu Santo Island. Heretofore this tern has been reported only from San José del Cabo in September. A juvenile female taken November 29, at Espiritu Santo Island, is now no. 36446 in the Bishop collection.

Sterna antillarum browni. Brown Least Tern. Reported heretofore only from San José del Cabo, and that, too, is the only place where I saw it. A flock of thirty was nesting on the beach, thus making this the southernmost known breeding station of the species on the Pacific coast. The birds arrived April 26, 1923, but did not start to lay their eggs until July 1. An adult female taken May 21 is now no. 36448 in the Bishop collection.

Chlidonias nigra surinamensis. Black Tern. An adult male seen and secured at Todos Santos, September 8, 1924, is now no. 37312 in the Bishop collection.

Sula nebouxii. Blue-footed Booby. No other observer has reported this bird from this district, and it was seen only once by me, off the wharf at La Paz, March 1, 1924, when two were secured from a flock of five. Unlike the Brewster Booby this species is not a wanderer, but prefers the vicinity of the islands on which it nests. An adult male is now no. 2906 in the Barnes collection.

Sula brewsteri. Brewster Booby. There are only two records from the region under discussion, that of a bird taken near Pichilique Bay, January, 1883, and one at

San José del Cabo, September 10, 1887. Townsend observed it at several places in the Gulf. I found this bird commonly during March in La Paz Bay, and in November about Espiritu Santo Island. An adult female taken at La Paz March 1, 1924, is now no. 36449 in the collection of Dr. Bishop.

Guara alba. White Ibis. Unlike other observers I found this bird scarce and only seen at La Paz a few times. An adult male taken March 6, 1924, is now no. 2925 in the Barnes collection.

Ixobrychus exilis hesperis. Least Bittern. This bird has been reported as common only at San José del Cabo in the fall migration. I saw only one at that place February 6, 1923. A single bird was seen and secured in the mangrove swamps at La Paz, September 21, 1923, and is now no. 2142 in the Barnes collection.

Ardea herodias sanctilucae. San Lucas Blue Heron. Common along the coast. Breeds in small colonies on one of the small islands in La Paz Bay near the town of La Paz. May 27, 1924, I found two nests with, respectively, two and three fresh eggs. The nests were placed low in a species of cactus. An immature female taken May 9, 1923, is now no. 36460 in the Bishop collection.

Rallus virginianus. Virginia Rail. Rare. Hitherto reported only from San José del Cabo. I saw and secured one at Todos Santos, October 31, 1923; it is now no. 2332 in the Barnes collection.

Gallinula chloropus cachinnans. Florida Gallinule. Seen only at San José del Cabo where commonly resident in the tules back of the beach. I saw several there with downy young during June. It is peculiar that in a similar environment at Todos Santos and San Pedro no gallinules have ever been reported. A male taken April 25, 1923, is now no. 13350 in the collection of D. R. Dickey, of Pasadena.

Fulica americana. American Coot. Common winter and also breeding bird at Todos Santos and San José del Cabo. Seen also rarely at La Paz and El Oro. An adult female taken at Todos Santos, July 19, 1924, is now no. 37323 in the Bishop collection.

Pisobia bairdii. Baird Sandpiper. Rare. A few individuals seen at San José del Cabo, April 5, 1923, and four at La Paz, September 24, 1923. The only other record for this bird in Lower California is of four specimens taken by Frazer at San José del Cabo, between September 13 and 30. An adult female taken by me at San José del Cabo, April 5, is now no. 36465 in the Bishop collection.

Pelidna alpina sakhalina. Red-backed Sandpiper. The only record for this bird in the Cape region is that they were seen, but no specimens taken, south of latitude 24° 30' by Belding (Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., vi, 1883, p. 351). On one occasion, only, I saw this bird, namely December 23, 1923, on the mud flats near La Paz, when several were seen and two secured which are now nos. 2587 and 2588 in the collection of Edw. E. Armstrong, of Chicago, Illinois.

Calidris alba. Sanderling. A rare migrant. Seen once at San José del Cabo, May 2, 1923, and once at Todos Santos, November 15, 1923. The former, an adult male, is now no. 36469 in the Bishop collection.

Tringa solitaria cinnamomea. Western Solitary Sandpiper. Rather common at San José del Cabo and Todos Santos, arriving in early August. Seen also in the Sierra de la Laguna, July 31, 1923, and August 26, 1924, and two at a roadside rain puddle near La Paz in September. An adult female taken July 31, 1923, in the Sierra de la Laguna and another taken at Todos Santos, September 19, 1924, are now nos. 36091 and 37328 in the Bishop collection.

Heteroscelus incanus. Wandering Tattler. Seen only once, on Espiritu Santo Island, November 6, 1923.

Buteo abbreviatus. Zone-tailed Hawk. A rare bird. Four seen at El Valle in January, and two at Todos Santos, one September 14, 1924, and the other November 13, 1923. Two immature birds, a male and female, taken at El Valle, January 21 and 23, 1924, are now nos. 36504 and 36505 in the Bishop collection, and an adult female taken at Todos Santos November 13, 1924, is in the Barnes collection.

Asio flammeus. Short-eared Owl. There are but two records of this bird being taken in this region, one by Xantus at Miraflores, November 25, 1860, and the other by Chas. H. Townsend at Cape San Lucas, March 23, 1911. I saw three during the month of February at San José del Cabo, but did not observe them elsewhere at any time.

Speotyto cunicularia hypugaea. Burrowing Owl. Seen on but two occasions, once at San José del Cabo, April 12, 1923, and again at Todos Santos, October 3, 1923. The latter is now in the Barnes collection.

Micropallas whitneyi sanfordi. Sanford Elf Owl. This was rather numerous at Miraflores in July. I also took an adult male at Todos Santos, November 14, 1923, which is now no. 36119 in the Bishop collection.

Coccyzus americanus occidentalis. California Cuckoo. Reported but once from the Cape region, near Triunfo, July 5, 1887. I met this bird only twice, once at San José del Cabo, June 29, 1923, and once at Todos Santos, September 3, 1924.

Agelaius phoeniceus sonoriensis. Sonoran Red-wing. Seen only at San José del Cabo, during March and April, when a small flock lived in a clump of tules near the town. Three specimens were taken, two March 17, 1923, and one April 5; these are now in the Barnes collection.

Sturnella neglecta. Western Meadowlark. Met once at San José del Cabo, where five were seen February 24, 1923, and again at El Oro, February 1, 1924, when four were seen and one, an adult female, was taken, which is now no. 36618 in the Bishop collection.

Passerculus rostratus halophilus. Laguna Marsh Sparrow. Not nearly as plentiful as *P. r. rostratus* or *P. r. guttatus*. A few taken both at San José del Cabo and Todos Santos. Four specimens taken in September, 1923, at the latter place are now nos. 45153-56 in the collection of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.

Spizella passerina arizonae. Western Chipping Sparrow. Two adult females, only, were seen and taken at El Valle, about 1500 feet elevation, January 16, 1924, and are now nos. 36655 and 36656 in the Bishop collection.

Spizella atrogularis. Black-chinned Sparrow. I met this sparrow only at El Valle where it was common between January 10 and 30, 1924. An adult female taken January 19 is now no. 36939 in the Bishop collection.

Melospiza lincolni. Lincoln Sparrow. This I found to be a rare bird. Seen only at El Oro, one February 1 and the other February 5, 1924. These are now nos. 36672 and 36673 in the Bishop collection.

Spiza americana. Dickcissel. Seen once at Todos Santos in October, 1923.

Piranga ludoviciana. Western Tanager. An adult female was taken at San José del Cabo, April 5, 1923, but not seen elsewhere by me, though it has been recorded from Cape San Lucas, La Paz and the Victoria Mountains. The above specimen is now no. 36722 in the Bishop collection.

Progne subis hesperia. Western Martin. Common at San José del Cabo, first appearing in June. They were nesting in holes in palm trees. Near La Paz I found large young in the cavity of a giant cactus, September 10, 1923. An immature female taken at Todos Santos, November 3, 1923, is now no. 36209 in the Bishop collection.

Mniotilta varia. Black-and-white Warbler. This warbler is heretofore known from Lower California by but one specimen, taken at Triunfo, December 20, 1887 (Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., xli, p. 178). During the year 1923 I took one specimen, each, at San José del Cabo, February 20, La Paz, September 28, and Todos Santos, November 6. The following year none was seen. The Todos Santos specimen, an adult female, is now no. 36226 in the Bishop collection.

Vermivora celata celata. Orange-crowned Warbler. Belding took a specimen at La Paz in January, 1882, and Frazar one at San José del Cabo, October 17, 1887. I saw this bird but once, at La Paz, October 21, 1923. It is an immature male and is now no. 37482 in the Bishop collection.

Setophaga ruticilla. American Redstart. Several were seen at San José del Cabo in the winter of 1923 and one was seen at Todos Santos, November 8. This constitutes the second notice of the redstart in Lower California, it formerly being known only from a specimen taken by Belding at Miraflores, February 24, 1883. An immature male taken April 10 at San José del Cabo, is now no. 36242 in the Bishop collection.

Salpinctes obsoletus obsoletus. Rock Wren. Rare; met with only at Todos Santos where four or five were seen during November, 1923, and one bird near La Paz, October 15, 1924. A specimen taken at Todos Santos, November 12, is now no. 2421 in the Barnes collection.

Catherpes mexicanus conspersus. Canyon Wren. Seen frequently in the Victoria Mountains, and found commonly on the rocky cliffs of the sea-coast south of La Paz and on Espiritu Santo Island. A juvenile male taken in the Laguna Mountains, July 20, 1923, is now no. 36264 in the Bishop collection.

Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, February 25, 1927.