

Some Bird Records from Northern Lower California.—During the months of June and July, 1927, while the writer was occupied with field work for the San Diego Society of Natural History, with the coöperation of the Mexican Government, in portions of the inland section of northern Lower California, the following bird records were made which seem worthy of note. The trip was principally for mammalogical purposes, and, in some of the cases where birds were only "observed," it was by reason of the observer's not having a gun in his hand at the time; for he is a firm believer in the collected specimen, when establishing records. For geographical convenience the short list of birds is given chronologically rather than in the order of the check-list.

The time between June 9 and June 12 was spent among the large junipers immediately west of the Ojos Negros ranch house, which is situated on the western side of Valle San Rafael. At this point Gray Vireos (*Vireo vicinior*) were breeding commonly and a number of specimens were collected. Several pairs were seen feeding young just out of the nest, and on June 10 a nest was found containing four young almost ready to fly. A visit to a small marsh that surrounded a pond some three and a half acres in extent, near the ranch house, revealed the presence of six pairs of Cinnamon Teal (*Querquedula cyanoptera*). On the evening of June 11, when mouse traps were being set through this marsh, a mother teal was seen with eight half-grown ducklings.

Early on the following morning (June 12) an adult Wilson Snipe (*Capella delicata*) flushed from the grass close to the writer's feet, as he was picking up the trap line. Careful search of an area fifty feet square failed to reveal a nest, though the bird gave every indication of nesting, by its actions when leaving and by the solicitous manner in which it circled about. Also, at the same early hour, eight Mallard Ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*) rose from the surface of the pond where they had been feeding.

On June 13, camp was established at Sangre de Cristo, on the eastern side of Valle San Rafael near the western base of the Sierra Juarez, and fourteen days were spent here in spite of severe desert heat. A springy area of about four acres exists in the bottom of a wide arroyo nearby, and there is a heavy stand of sedge grass and tules as a result of the water. From the midst of this growth, about 8:30 on the evening of June 16, while refreshing himself in a large, cool pool after a scorching hot day, the writer heard the familiar call of a Farallon Rail (*Creciscus jamaicensis coturniculus*). The bird kept up the song without intermission during the fifteen or twenty minutes spent at the pool. It was again heard on June 23 and 24. A sharp watch was kept and several lines of mouse traps were set through the marsh in an attempt to secure one of the rails, but no specimens were seen or captured. On the evening of June 23 the writer flushed three Wilson Snipe from a boggy spot in this marsh. About the jojoba bushes (*Simmondsia californica*) numbers of Desert Black-throated Sparrows (*Amphispiza bilineata desertyicola*) were breeding, and specimens were secured.

The period from June 27 to July 20 was spent in Valle de la Trinidad, where two camps were made—the first in the mesquites (*Prosopis glandulosa*) near the western end of the "valle", and the second about three and a half miles farther east, near a spring on the northern side. This latter camp was amid true desert vegetation, the creosote bush (*Covillea glutinosa*) and catclaw mesquite (*Acacia greggii*) being the predominant shrubs.

Early on the morning of June 30, when all hands were at work preparing mammal specimens, the sharp cluck, cluck of a California Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*) was heard nearby. Guns were instantly loaded and two of the three members of the party went in pursuit. The bird remained silent for a short time and then flushed near the writer, but in such a way that shooting was impossible, although a clear view of the fleeing bird was had. Again, on the evening of July 6, a cuckoo was seen, but out of range. A heavy rain had fallen during the afternoon and the bird was drying itself on the uppermost branches of a mesquite.

On the afternoon of July 1, a walk of exploration was made along the creek which flows through a narrow rocky gorge westward from Valle de la Trinidad. At places, in the western part of the valley, deep barrancas have been cut by the creek and here many Rough-winged Swallows (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*) were nesting, the soft bank being in places well perforated with their holes. Along the rushing creek a lone Western Sandpiper (*Ereunetes mauri*) was collected. Upon dissection this bird

proved to be a female that had bred and was now returning from her northern breeding grounds.

It might be mentioned that, at the first Valle de la Trinidad camp, Western Mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*) were exceedingly abundant among the mesquites. No less than twenty pairs were breeding in an area not exceeding six acres. At the time of our visit, the young were just leaving their nests and were much sought by the Indians for cage birds.

While at the second camp, during the early part of the afternoon of July 14, the writer was attending to his traps, which were set for Round-tailed Ground Squirrels, when a shadow passed close by. Glancing up, he saw an adult Zone-tailed Hawk (*Buteo abbreviatus*) not over fifty feet above his head, so close that the bluish bill was plainly visible—and he was gunless! A sharp watch was kept thereafter, but the hawk did not return until July 18, when it was seen again, about mid-day, flying high overhead. This mid-day appearance of the hawk might be attributed to the fact that the Round-tailed Ground Squirrels, which were no doubt the attraction for the bird, were most active during the hottest hours of the day. Scott Orioles (*Icterus parisorum*) were occasionally seen at this camp and an immature specimen was collected July 16.

The time from July 20 to July 25, 1927, was spent at Laguna Hanson. The writer had previously visited this locality during the summer of 1925 and had noted several species of water birds breeding in the tule patches—American Eared Grebes (*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*), Mallard Ducks, Ruddy Ducks (*Erismatura jamaicensis*), Virginia Rails (*Rallus virginianus*), and American Coots (*Fulica americana*). A return trip had been made to the same locality during October, 1926, when the lake was found to be completely dry. According to the custodian of a gun club who resides at the lake, there had been no breeding water birds at Laguna Hanson that summer. Heavy winter rains had again filled this shallow basin, and a check was made in 1927 to determine how quickly the breeding birds would return. Of the five kinds previously noted but two had returned, the Eared Grebes and the Coots. Both were again present in about the same numbers as in 1925, in spite of a presumable absence of one season.

In the coniferous forest near the lake, two adult Mexican Crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra stricklandi*) were taken. Both were males and dissection proved they were breeding. California Linnets (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*) were fairly abundant, and birds with the natal down clinging to the newly acquired plumage were collected, as were two specimens of Lawrence Goldfinch (*Spinus lawrencei*) in the same condition. Both these species were thus established as breeding birds in the pine belt of the Sierra Juarez.—LAURENCE M. HUEY, *San Diego, California, August 29, 1927.*

Western Mockingbird Nesting in a Mail Box.—On May 14, 1927, during a hike with the Boy Scouts of Troop 41, San Diego, California, the attention of the writer was attracted by a "cheeping" sound, as of young birds, issuing from an R. F. D. mail box at the roadside. Investigation led to the discovery of a nest, in the box, of the Western Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*), containing four young birds. A slight opening at the corner of the box permitted the entrance of the parent birds. As the books available to me state, without exception, that the mockingbird nests in such situations as bushes, thickets, vines, thorny trees, etc., the mail box site would seem sufficiently unusual to be worthy of record. There were three mail boxes beside one another on the shelf, the central one being that occupied by the birds.—JACK C. VON BLOEKER, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, July 20, 1927.*

Condor Caught in San Joaquin Valley.—One evening in September, 1926, when returning to Grapevine from our work of surveying for the 220,000 volt transmission line of the Southern California Edison Company through Tejon Canyon, we saw a Condor on the ground, where it had been feeding on a dead cow. Knowing that these birds sometimes gorge themselves until they cannot rise from the ground and that