

pattern, or its crest or its tail feathers. Song as one phase of living behavior has gone very far with some species nevertheless, so much so that Schuyler Mathews has said, "Nearly all birds sing in strictly measured time, many sing a perfect bar, or measure, and a considerable number, several bars;" and "we have convincing proof that their music is built upon definite primitive scales—scales which the birds used aeons of years before man did." Speaking of the Hermit Thrush, this author says, "Somehow or other the motives of the Hermit all fit together in a remarkably harmonious fashion, and it is a very simple matter to combine the anti-phonal songs of two singers so they form a unit of musical thought."

There has been much observation and thought concerning the origins of bird music and insect music. The impulse is as deep as life, but how and why can be only matters of eternal speculation, and that solves nothing. Birds and insects appreciate sound in their elemental way as thoroughly as men. Somehow their songs unfold in harmony with the deep mysterious developing laws of life, just as specializations of their feet, feathers, bill, etc. We know not one thing about it, however. I would at times think it were a blind rhythm of development in the life of the bird as much as something conscious for the reason that we have marvelous specializations in the inanimate, as among snow flakes. Hundreds of different crystalline forms of snow flakes are known, some simple, others marvelously refined and specialized, yet formed within the same apparently homogeneous water, H₂O, within the same hexagonal system of crystallization. Depending upon some fine internal or external conditions, the snow flake may take on almost any form, and perhaps there are thousands of variations men have not yet seen. So it is easy to believe that life may develop complexities like the snow flakes themselves through no living control, or perchance with living control thrown in where we least expect it. The question is not going to be solved soon.

Birds have weird plasticities of behavior, as does all life, and I am convinced Chewinks are only just beginning to show us a few traits in their songs because we have stumbled upon them. Perhaps the entire Chewink race of America has this off-singing behavior observed by Hunt and myself, he in the far west, and I in the east.—H. A. ALLARD, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., January 18, 1928.

Field Notes on Certain California Birds.—*Erismatura jamaicensis*. Ruddy Duck. In Grinnell and Wythe's "Directory to the Bird-life of the San Francisco Bay Region" (1927), this species is mentioned in terms indicating that it is rarely found on salt or brackish water in that region except in the winter months. On July 10, 1927, I had a good view from the train of a flock of about six males in Richardson's Bay, in the vicinity of Elmonte, a station near Sausalito, Marin County.

Colaptes cafer collaris. Red-shafted Flicker. In A. B. Howell's "Birds of the Islands off the Coast of Southern California" (1917), this species is recorded from Santa Catalina Island only during the winter. On June 11, 1927, I saw a male in a small tree in a canyon near Avalon, perched close to a hole that probably contained his nest. Not being aware at the time that the species was not known to breed on the island, I did not investigate further.

Sitta carolinensis aculeata. Slender-billed Nuthatch. On June 22, 1927, I saw my first bird of this subspecies in trees near Lagunita, Stanford University, Palo Alto. A few minutes later, while I was inside the little bandstand near the shore of Lagunita, Mrs. Blake, who was outside, saw him fly up under one of the tiles on the roof and disappear. During the rest of the summer, up to the time we left Stanford, he was found going to bed there nearly every evening we were able to look for him, his choice of chamber varying from the corner tile to the eleventh tile from the end. His approach was usually announced by his call from among the Monterey pines planted around the lake, after which he would appear in a pine close to the bandstand, climb up and down and "yank" a few times, and then fly up and out of sight under a tile. His hour of retiring, usually just before the sun disappeared, corresponded in a general way with the decrease in the length of day, as follows (time of sunset, furnished by the U. S. Weather Bureau, in parentheses): June 29, 7:25 p. m. (7:35); June 30, 7:24 (7:35); July 5, 7:13 (7:34); July 9, 7:10 (7:33); July 20, 7:03 (7:28); July 24, 7:04 (7:25); August 5, 6:54 (7:14); August 20, 6:43 (6:57); August 26, 6:38 (6:49).

On two occasions, two nuthatches were seen together near the bandstand, but only one was ever seen to enter a tile. On two or three evenings, a nuthatch appeared as usual, but was evidently disturbed by our presence and made off in another direction. On three occasions a Plain Tit was seen to go under a different tile, about five minutes after the Nuthatch, and once a Red-shafted Flicker disappeared under a tile, but flew out when I walked up.

Psaltriparus minimus minimus. Coast Bush-tit. On June 27, 1927, I collected in Palo Alto a deserted nest of this species containing eleven eggs. Eight of these were unincubated and were easily blown, while the others were dried up or rotten and more or less incubated. At least one contained a medium-sized embryo. This was evidently a case of the use of the same nest twice, presumably by one, of a pair, which had lost its mate.

Turdus migratorius propinquus. Western Robin. At least one pair, and probably more, nested at Stanford University in the summer of 1927. On July 23 a pair was calling noisily, as though with young, in shrubbery in the inner quadrangle of the University, and on the evening of that day the birds were vigorously pursuing a Barn Owl in the same place. Prof. L. R. Abrams informed me that he had not noticed them at Stanford in summer prior to 1927. —S. F. BLAKE, *Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington, D. C., February 17, 1928.*

Summer Record of the Cedar Waxwing in Yosemite Valley.—During early June, 1927, a member of the Nature Guide field party reported having seen a bird near Clark's bridge, Yosemite Valley, which when described fitted best the Cedar Waxwing. Mention of this fact brought out the further information that Mrs. Frank Ewing, a resident of the Valley, had seen a Cedar Waxwing in her yard about June 5 or 6, 1927. A day or two later a Cedar Waxwing which had become soaked with oil from one of the mosquito controlled pools was brought to the Yosemite Museum. On June 8, four birds were seen by Donald McLean near the Superintendent's office in the new village, and the next few days probably the same four birds spent their time in the cherry tree not far distant. Cherries were just starting to ripen at the time. So far as I have been able to ascertain, this is one of the first summer records for this bird for the Valley floor. Grinnell and Storer (*Animal Life in the Yosemite*) record a Cedar Waxwing in the higher mountains during the fall migration.—H. C. BRYANT, *Berkeley, California, March 30, 1928.*

A Record Set of Eggs of the Golden Eagle.—Although I have heard of two sets of four eggs of the Bald Eagle being taken, I have been unable to find any notation of a like number for the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*). Therefore I wish to record a set of four eggs I was fortunate in finding in California near the beginning of March of the present year.

These specimens, which were practically fresh when taken, are very much alike in shape and nearly similar in size, measuring in inches 2.70 x 2.16, 2.75 x 2.18, 2.77 x 2.25, 2.80 x 2.28. While both in coloration and in markings the eggs are more uniform than those of the average set, except for the unusual number they are in nowise peculiar. It is interesting to note that the nest from which this record set was collected held but two incubated eggs in 1927, measuring 2.77 x 2.25 and 2.81 x 2.26.

Other noteworthy sets of eggs of Raptores that have been reported to our museum are a set of the White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) with six eggs, taken in California years ago, and a set of the Western Red-tail (*Buteo borealis calurus*) with five eggs collected more recently by Mr. Jules Labarthe in Arizona.—MILTON S. RAY, *Pacific Museum of Analytical Oology, San Francisco, California, March 11, 1928.*

Bird Notes from Santa Catalina Island.—During the noon-hour of November 8, 1927, I saw two Cedar Waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) eating the berries from a holly tree near the Avalon High School, Santa Catalina Island. They were in a flock of probably twenty-five Gambel Sparrows and San Clemente House Finches. They were under observation for fully five minutes and flew away with the other birds only when I got within a few feet of them.

On the afternoon of January 1, 1928, on the south slope of Pebbly Beach canyon, near Avalon, I saw a male Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius phalaena*) feeding in