

Zonotrichia leucophrys leucophrys (p. 102). The four specimens in the collection are *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*, which is the winter visiting race in this district—not *Z. l. leucophrys*.

The record of *Dendroica townsendi* (p. 103) taken on September 8, 1918, should be changed to *Dendroica occidentalis*.—MARGARET W. WYTHE, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, December 18, 1928.*

On the Courtship of the American Bittern.—On May 8, 1928, near the north end of Osooyos Lake, British Columbia, the writer and Mr. S. J. Darcus of Penticton, British Columbia, witnessed the display of a male American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) and the consummation of his courtship.

The observers' attention had been attracted by a Bittern's "pumping" coming from a recently flooded meadow where the growth was not sufficient to conceal any of the birds that were present. A scrutiny of this area with 6-power binoculars revealed the author of the sounds, some ninety yards distant, standing bolt upright in the shallow water, with neck outstretched and bill pointing skyward. Twenty-five yards farther out, fully exposed to view on dry ground bare of vegetation, crouched a second bird with head drawn in close to the body which was in a nearly horizontal position. This second bird proved to be a female. Suddenly the nearest bird began to "pump"; two "pumps" in quick succession, then repeated a minute or so later. During these efforts the body was thrust forward and bill pointed towards the water. After "pumping" the third time he assumed a stooping attitude and stalked slowly through the shallow water toward the motionless, crouching female, displaying as he did so a large area of white behind the shoulders. When within six feet or so of his mate he began walking around her in a circle, still stooping and displaying still larger patches of white. Suddenly came a movement so fast as almost to escape detection, and the female disappeared beneath the outspread, vibrating wings of her mate. Congress completed, the male stood quietly to one side while the female shook herself just as a domestic fowl does under the same circumstances.—J. A. MUNRO, *Okanagan Landing, British Columbia, December 3, 1928.*

Eight-mile Censuses in 1927.—In the CONDOR for May, 1927 (pp. 144-147), I discussed 13 eight-mile censuses made over a tract of diversified country in central Oklahoma during 1926. Since we have left Oklahoma, it seemed advisable to give the results of the five censuses taken in Cleveland County in 1927, so that they can be compared with the corresponding ones of 1926. (Numbers of species are given first, individuals second.)

1926. January 1, 39: 2400; February 1, 35: 1400; March 20, 45: 600; April 24, 61: 460; May 4, 66: 450.

1927. January 8, 33: 760; February 22, 36: 1600; March 28, 47: 900; April 24, 59: 500; May 5, 67: 600.

The numbers of species are very much the same during the two years except in January; the numbers of individuals differ more, but not very much, again with the exception of January. In 1927 there were more birds from late February on, than had been seen in 1926 except on April 24 when they were practically the same. The reason for the striking difference in the two Januaries lies largely in the great abundance of blackbirds in 1926 and their entire absence in 1927; moreover, twice as many sparrows were recorded in 1926 as in 1927, and four times as many Crows and Meadowlarks.

The really surprising agreement of the findings in both years in March, April and May—the main migration months—gives additional evidence of the relative stability of the bird population in this region, due apparently to the small number of transients.—MARGARET M. NICE, *Columbus, Ohio, January 3, 1929.*

Bird Notes from Big Bear Lake, San Bernardino Mountains, During the Summer of 1928.—On July 1 a Dusky Poor-will (*Phalaenoptilus nuttallii californicus*) was flushed from under a pine near Pine Knot. This species seems to be of rather unusual occurrence in this locality and had probably drifted up from the more favorable surroundings of the desert slope to the east.

Two Western Gnatcatchers (*Poliptila caerulea obscura*) were seen on July 1 in a little cañon at 7000 feet altitude, among the pines in a typical Transition associa-

tion. This is my first record for this species at Big Bear Lake though it occurs quite commonly ten miles to the east among the piñon pines.

My first record for the Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens cinerascens*) for Big Bear Lake was a single bird near Pine Knot on July 14.

On September 1 a Road-runner (*Geococcyx californianus*) crossed in front of my car on the main road through the pines on the north shore of the lake near Camp Juniper. I believe that this is the first record for this bird for Big Bear Lake. To me the bird seemed very much out of place in this Transition association.

On July 5 an American Osprey (*Pandion haliaëtus carolinensis*) was seen flying along the shore of Big Bear Lake near the Moon Camp. It was carrying a fish in its talons. This bird is of rather uncommon occurrence for this region.

During the latter part of August and early September, Pintail Ducks (*Dafila acuta tzitzihoo*) were unusually abundant at Baldwin Lake, and several large flocks were seen on Big Bear Lake. Many were shot on the opening day of the season, October 1, but the greater number left soon after the bombardment started.—WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California, January 20, 1929.*

Lesser Yellow-legs in Willamette Valley, Oregon.—On November 21, 1928, I found two Lesser Yellow-legs (*Totanus flavipes*) feeding in shallow water of a small slough running into the Willamette River, near its mouth. It was a sunny, warm day and the birds permitted me to approach within twenty yards but worked away when I tried to get nearer. They were there when I left, as I did not flush them. These two birds are the first of this species I have seen in the Willamette Valley.—ED. S. CURRIER, *Portland, Oregon, January 10, 1929.*

Blackbirds Feeding on the Forest Tent Caterpillar.—At Rollings Lake, British Columbia, on June 5, 1925, it was observed that Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*) and Brewer Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) were busily feeding on the forest tent caterpillars that partly had defoliated the poplar trees along the lake shore. Both species nested in the vicinity; the redwings in two small tule marshes that fringe the lake shore; the Brewer Blackbirds in stumps, on the ground, or in crevices of dead poplar trees that stood close to the lake. Blackbirds of both species also were seen flying from the infested trees to their nests and back again, presumably carrying the larvae to their young.—J. A. MUNRO, *Okanagan Landing, B. C., January 15, 1929.*

A Shower of Grebes.—During an early morning hour (about 2 A. M.) of December 13, 1928, residents of Caliente, Nevada, were awakened by a heavy thumping of something falling on the roofs of their houses. Those who were curious enough to step outside and investigate the unusual occurrence found scores of water birds in the new fallen snow. The next morning, several thousand eared grebes (*Colymbus nigricollis californicus*) were found on the ground and flat roofs of business houses throughout the city.

Mr. E. C. D. Marriage, Editor of the Caliente Herald, and formerly secretary to the Cambridge University (England) Natural History Society, writes that "literally thousands of these birds were found in every portion of the town and outskirts." In a personal communication to me he says, "We saved thousands by putting them in the creek; most of those that died were crippled in some way; they were forced out of the air by the heavy density of the snow which bore them to the ground, thousands being buried under the snow, and working themselves out in the morning. I watched hundreds coming up through the snow. Many flew off at noon, going southwest. Hundreds were killed by hitting the wires, houses, and trees. Caliente had the main bunch, but they were scattered for twenty miles every way."

In a later issue of his paper, this Editor asserts: "Many thousands of the birds have remained in the vicinity of Caliente in the Meadow Valley Wash and other streams and ponds. Thousands died, and Deputy Sheriff Frank Palmer is superintending the work of clearing the streets and the flat roofs of the business houses of the dead birds which died when they hit the buildings and trees of Caliente, the dead birds being stacked in big piles and hauled away." Numerous other reports confirm the Editor's account.