

Mr. Edward W. Gifford of Oakland, an experienced aviculturist specializing in the Columbiformes, states that *risoria* is such a common dove in captivity that he doubts if any are now regularly imported. Birds sell locally sometimes as low as 25 or 50 cents apiece, and many farmers have them about their premises.

Mr. W. Leland Smith of Fair Oaks, Sacramento County, writes me that he has liberated Ringed Turtle Doves on various occasions on his place and that there are a few "wild" ones around now, nesting in the oaks. But these birds are so tame, "always under foot", that Mr. Smith thinks they would promptly be exterminated if they should venture onto unprotected land.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley, March 31, 1929.*

Mountain Bluebirds Winter in Montana.—Having read a newspaper item, under date of January 15, 1929, which stated that a pair of bluebirds was wintering in the yard of Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Spaid, of Missoula, Montana, I wrote to Mr. Spaid for confirmation of the report, and for certain additional information about the birds' stay. In his kind reply he verified the record, and gave all the desired facts.

The hardy visitors, a male and a female, are Mountain Bluebirds (*Sialia currucoides*). They are believed to be a pair that nested in Mr. Spaid's garage last summer; they have spent the nights in that building during the winter. They are both strong, healthy birds, capable of normal flight, and "well able to care for themselves". Answering a question about the birds' ability to secure sufficient food, Mr. Spaid writes: "It was eighteen below zero yesterday and the birds were both busy eating berries from the vines around the front porch. We feed them only once in a while."

The wintering of this species so far north, in the interior, is very unusual. I do not know of any previous record of its occurrence in Montana at this season. Mr. Spaid writes that he has observed this bluebird in different localities from Washington eastward, but has never known one to remain so far north during the winter. In describing the seasonal residence of the Mountain Bluebird in Montana, A. A. Saunders states: "This species is so early in its arrival in spring, that it seems as if it would some day be found to winter in the state, at least on the west side of the continental divide. There are no winter records, however, at present. I was told of a bluebird wintering near Choteau, in the winter of 1911-12, but the information reached me second-hand and I was unable to find out from whom it came or to verify it" (Pacific Coast Avifauna No. 14, 1921, p. 171).—WINTON WEYDEMEYER, *Fortune, Montana, January 28, 1929.*

The Cassin Purple Finch in San Diego.—In his Distributional List of the Birds of California (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 11, 1915, p. 107), Dr. J. Grinnell gives no record for the Cassin Purple Finch (*Carpodacus cassinii*) south of Riverside County. Its occurrence in Balboa Park, San Diego, is therefore of interest and an extension of the known range. I first saw this species in San Diego on March 23, 1927, when several of both sexes were seen, together with large numbers of California Purple Finches (*Carpodacus purpureus californicus*) and House Finches (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*), feeding on the sunflower seed supplied to the parrots in the San Diego Zoo. These birds were also seen by Leroy W. Arnold of this city who agreed with my identification.

Although I watched carefully for the re-appearance of this species it was not again observed until February 25, 1929, when an immature male was taken from my bird banding trap at the O'Rourke Zoological Institute in Balboa Park. This specimen was preserved and is now in the collection of the San Diego Natural History Museum where my identification has been verified by Mr. Laurence M. Huey.—FRANK F. GANDER, *O'Rourke Zoological Institute, Balboa Park, San Diego, California, March 22, 1929.*

A Male Linnet in Female Plumage.—While collecting at Nashmead, Mendocino County, California, on May 7, 1926, I took what I thought to be a purple finch in immature plumage. The bird was singing when taken but I paid no attention to the song, so intent was I on getting the specimen. After skinning the bird I examined the testes and noted that they were greatly enlarged and wrote on the label at the time "testes developed, breeding". I had no other evidence that the bird was actually

breeding, but the fact that it was in song and with enlarged testes combined with the knowledge that purple finches breed their first year in this plumage caused me to dismiss it with no more thought.

More than a year later while looking over these specimens I was suddenly startled to discover that in the meantime the bird had transformed into a linnet! It could not have been a bird of the year for several reasons. The bill and feet appear to be those of an old bird. The enlarged testes and song would indicate that the bird was breeding. In short, it is a perfectly good adult male California Linnet (*Carpodacus mexicanus frontalis*) with plumage indistinguishable from that of a female.—FRANK N. BASSETT, *San Francisco, California, March 27, 1929.*

California Murre in Orange County, California.—On January 19, 1929, I discovered a live California Murre (*Uria troille californica*) on the ocean shore at Sunset Beach, Orange County. The bird was in a weakened condition, with considerable oil on its underparts. The southernmost record for the species is only a few miles south at Newport Beach, in the same county (Van Rossem, *Condor*, xvi, 1914, p. 144).—J. STEVENSON, *Los Angeles, California, February 15, 1929.*

Ross Gulls for Dinner.—In past years, skins of the Ross Gull (*Rhodostethia rosea*), which confines its habitat to the Arctic, were exceedingly rare in collections. Dr. Louis B. Bishop informs me that not more than fifteen years ago \$200 was considered a fair price to ask for a specimen. Nowadays, when many more Ross Gull skins have come out of the far north, their value has naturally been very much reduced. Nevertheless they are still keenly sought by museums and collectors, and would command a price of \$10 or so.

Charles D. Brower, an American citizen who is in charge of the trading post at Barrow, Alaska, most northerly inhabited spot on the American continent, has a son living in San Diego, and on his periodical visits to the United States he always visits this city. Incidentally, he has become much interested in the San Diego Society of Natural History, and has donated to it many valuable consignments of Arctic birds and mammals, including what may be the largest series of Ross Gulls in the country.

In connection with his latest gift, which included twenty-five Ross Gull skins, Mr. Brower wrote: "I did get a good crack at the Ross Gulls again this fall [1928]. One day, the 26th of September, they were around in thousands. If I could have had the time, I could have had several hundred birds to skin. The eskimo shoot them for food, and they are mighty good at that. I have eaten them many times, and this fall I had them fried and roasted until I almost turned into a Ross Gull myself. They taste just as do the Golden Plover, and are just as fat in the fall."

Mr. Brower also stated that, following this notable visitation on September 26 and 27, the gulls left "for off-shore where the boats out whaling saw them until they [the boats] came in for good."—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, February 15, 1929.*