

in size with that of the Louisiana Heron (measurements made on skins) as well as with the Little Blue Heron, and it is possible that structurally, also, the species are similar.

Measurements of fossil specimen:

Greatest length.....	92.2 mm.
Breadth of proximal end.....	8.3
Breadth of distal end.....	8.5

Nycticorax nycticorax (Linnaeus). A complete left tarsometatarsus from Pit 67; Los Angeles Museum specimen no. E1839.

Measurements of fossil specimen:

Greatest length.....	91.0 mm.
Breadth of proximal end.....	12.3
Breadth of distal end.....	11.7

—HILDEGARDE HOWARD, *Los Angeles Museum, August 29, 1929.*

Woodpecker Perching on a Wire.—The Lewis Woodpecker (*Asyndesmus lewisi*) has the reputation of possessing a number of characteristics not usually associated with its family. In sustained flight it has the appearance of a small crow, reminding me strongly of the European jackdaw. Its aerial sallies after insects, with return to the starting point, are performed in true flycatcher fashion. But most un-woodpecker-like of all, it seemed to me, was an act observed this summer, when I saw a Lewis Woodpecker standing on an electric wire, as comfortably balanced as any perching bird. Behind a cottage which I was occupying at the time, near Colorado Springs, Colorado, ran a service line of poles and wires, which was used as a sort of highway by a pair of Lewis Woodpeckers. They commonly progressed by passing from one pole to the next, describing a downward arc between poles and alighting on or near the top of each pole. But on July 4, I saw one of the birds standing on a wire some distance from a pole. Observers to whom I mentioned the incident stated that they could not recall ever having seen a woodpecker of any kind perched on a wire.—CLINTON G. ABBOTT, *San Diego Society of Natural History, San Diego, California, July 29, 1929.*

California Black Rail in Marin County, California, in August.—On Sunday, August 11, 1929, while on an Audubon Association of the Pacific field trip, one of the members, Mr. Albert B. Stephens, picked up from the salicornia, about 25 feet east of the railroad track at Manzanita, a dead female (young of the year) California Black Rail, *Crecisus jamaicensis coturniculus* (Ridgway), which through the interest of Mr. C. Lockerbie, leader, was brought to the writer for identification. The date of this rare find in this locality seemed to be an early one and prompted the query in the minds of some: has this tiny mite been nesting right under our noses after all? Who knows? Through the courtesy of Dr. Grinnell, the specimen was identified and placed on file (no. 53990) in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, Berkeley.—BESSIE W. KIBBE, *Berkeley, California, August 15, 1929.*

The Elf Owl in Western Arizona.—An attempt last year to find out where one might expect to meet the Elf Owl (*Micropallas whitneyi*) in Arizona showed me that there was much uncertainty on the part of various authorities regarding its seasonal and its geographic distribution. The field notes which I was able to assemble add some evidence to the small total. The species seems to be rare west of and south of the middle of the state. Four camps were made in the saguaros between Mohawk and Yuma—two in February, one in May, and one in the first week of June. During February a ladder was used to search nearly a hundred woodpecker holes in the cactus, but no evidence of elf owls was found at any of these camps.

Beginning May 29, a survey was extended eastward. The first camp was made on the Papago Indian Reservation near Covered Wells, in typical saguaro association, and observation was carried on during several hours of the night and the

two twilights without locating any owls. The following night camp was made in the live oaks of the Tumacacori Mountains, about thirty miles northeast of Nogales. Here the sun had little more than set before elf owls began whistling in various directions. One was collected and several others were located. This station is high above the saguaro belt, and produced such Sierran species as Mearns Quail and Lawrence Flycatcher. The owls showed evidence of breeding in holes in cottonwoods.

The next station was just outside Tucson on the Rillito, in saguaro and mesquite association. Here again the birds began activity as soon as the sun was well down, and they proved to be extremely abundant among the mesquites. They were observed flying up into the saguaros and entering woodpecker holes. The next day, June 2, two complete sets of eggs (of two each) were taken from holes in the saguaros. The return to California was made without further opportunity to look for the birds.

My experience suggests that:

- (1) During the breeding season the Elf Owls readily make their presence known at early twilight and continue calling for some time,
- (2) They are not difficult to locate,
- (3) They are rare or absent in the southwestern part of the state,
- (4) They breed in the mountains up to altitudes far above the saguaro belt,
- (5) They breed later than one would expect owls in warm climate, with secure nesting cavities, to breed.

Notes on the winter distribution of this owl are much to be desired.—LOYE MILLER, *University of California at Los Angeles, July 30, 1929.*

Flying Defense of a Golden Eagle.—On September 2, 1929, we made an interesting trip down the coast of Monterey County from Monterey to a point about fifteen miles below Big Sur. This is the end of the Roosevelt Highway at the present time.

In the early afternoon we noted a young Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) being harried by a Western Red-tailed Hawk (*Buteo borealis calurus*). The hawk would circle to gain elevation and then swoop down like a falling body to attack. Just before the hawk reached his enemy the Golden Eagle would roll over in the air so as to have its talons uppermost and would complete the roll as the hawk swept by. This was done several times while the birds remained in sight. The eagle did not seem to hurry its flight at any time and gave the impression that it would rather be left alone than fight back.—L. PH. BOLANDER and CHAS. A. BRYANT, *Oakland, California, September 10, 1929.*

EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

In the death of Roswell Samuel Wheeler in September, 1929, the Cooper Club has lost another of its old-time members. Wheeler joined the Club in 1894, the second year of its existence, to become one of the small coterie whose interest insured the continued activity of the Northern Division. In later years there were periods when his attendance at meetings was irregular or impossible, but he kept

in touch with the Club to the last, and his concern in our well-being was unflagging. Wheeler's interest in ornithology lay mainly in egg collecting, and throughout his life his vacations and holidays were, when possible, devoted to this pursuit. For the past twenty years or more he was in the Oakland School Department, serving as principal in several different schools.—H. S. SWARTH.