

or arrives. One year many of the goldfinches evidently roosted at night in a group of eucalyptus trees adjacent to the row of elms. The sidewalks and ground beneath the trees are littered with debris from the feast, fine bits from the samaras, occasional seeds or bits of seeds, and a few intact samaras loosened in feeding operations, while the whitish droppings spot the ground after a day or two of feeding in any particular tree.

At this season the goldfinches are beginning the spring molt, but only a few yellow feathers are in evidence when they are working in the elms. At times California Linnets join the goldfinches, and in 1929 there were two Pine Siskins present for several days.

During the remainder of the year the Willow Goldfinches are scattered about the valley country, in gardens or along the stream courses. Groups of moderate size are sometimes seen in other favorable feeding places, as on a Babylonian willow early in bud, or on the dried blossom heads of cosmos left by a bird-loving gardener in late autumn.

The regularity with which the goldfinches visit this ephemeral crop of the elms suggests that in some way the "news" is spread among the population and the birds quickly gather. Before the seeds are ready only scattering individuals are to be observed; but once the seeds reach the "milk" stage the birds assemble, and they continue in numbers until the food has passed beyond the range of palatability for them. The untouched seeds mature and turn brownish, the samaras whiten and shower down, and the goldfinches seek other feeding places until another year rolls around.—TRACY I. STORER, *University of California, Davis, March 30, 1931.*

Behavior of Parent Killdeers.—The following account of behavior of Killdeers (*Oxyechus vociferus*) was related to me by friends and seems worthy of record. They were driving east on the Alpine Hi-way above Pine Grove, in Amador County, when they noticed two little fledglings in the road. One of the ladies thought it a shame to leave such young birds alone and apparently without care, to the mercy of passing motorists, and consequently doomed to certain death. She accordingly stepped from the car, picked up the little orphans and, placing them in a pocket of her coat, carried them back, and the party proceeded on its way.

A gentleman of the party protested that it was murder thus to carry these little fellows away, that they could not live in captivity, and that even though they might survive, being the young of the killdeer, they would not sing.

The discussion continued for some miles up the road when it was decided to return the youngsters to the place whence they had been taken.

As the original spot was neared, both parents made for the car. When it stopped they both pecked savagely at the tires, and when the young were placed on the ground one bird, apparently the female, assisted the youngsters in making a most miraculous disappearance, while her mate continued a vicious attack on the front tires.—HENRY WARRINGTON, *Jackson, California, March 28, 1931.*

Whistling Swans on Salton Sea.—Early in December of 1930 my neighbor, Mr. Seth Hartley, told me of seeing three swans on Salton Sea. A few days later he saw presumably the same three birds fly over a blind, where they received a volley that caused one to fall in a field, where it was captured. It proved to be an adult female Whistling Swan (*Olor columbianus*) and seemed to be in a dying condition. But after a few days it seemed to be well on the way to complete recovery and would dive for food and swim around a reservoir with infinite grace. After a couple of weeks it began to fail, and on December 31, 1930, it died.

Robert Leatherman, the young man who was taking care of the bird for me, stated that the swan sang on the afternoon and evening of its death. The song was loud enough so that he could hear it while he was in his home about sixty feet distant. The song had absolutely no resemblance to any of the calls that the bird often gave and he could not describe it except to state that it was a real song and pleasing to the ear.

It is my opinion that the swans are accidentally shot by hunters who think they are "large geese". It behooves members of the Cooper Club to help educate hunters or these magnificent birds soon may be exterminated.—WILSON C. HANNA, *Colton, California, February 12, 1931.*