

Sept., 1931

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Lophortyx gambeli gambeli. While we were at San Clemente Island on October 25, 1930, van Rossem collected an adult male Gambel Quail. One must assume that the bird had been introduced there but the details are lacking. This is of course a new record for any of the islands.

Ceryle alcyon. During the past three years a single individual has always been seen by the writer and his companions whenever we visited Santa Barbara Island. Through an oversight the published statement of its occurrence there has not heretofore been made. The bird was seen last on August 9, 1930.

Colaptes cafer collaris. The remains of a dead flicker were seen by van Rossem on San Miguel Island on December 28, 1930.

Myiarchus cinerascens cinerascens. Six of these birds were seen by us on Santa Barbara Island on August 9, 1930. The species has been recorded before only from Santa Cruz Island.

Sayornis sayus; *Sayornis nigricans*. Both of these phoebes were seen by van Rossem on San Miguel Island on December 28, 1930, and a specimen of the former was collected.

Passerculus rostratus rostratus. A specimen of this bird was collected by van Rossem on San Miguel Island on December 28, 1930. This is a new record for the islands.

Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli. This species was abundant on San Nicolas Island on February 24, 1929, and a specimen was collected by van Rossem.

Passerella iliaca sinuosa; *Hyllocichla guttata guttata*. Specimens of both these birds were collected by van Rossem during our visit to Santa Barbara Island on February 25, 1929.—J. R. PEMBERTON, *Beverly Hills, California, May 2, 1931*.

The Breeding of the Mockingbird in the San Francisco Bay District.—For many years mockingbirds (*Mimus polyglottos leucopterus*) have been known as rare winter visitors to the San Francisco Bay region. Grinnell and Wythe (Pacific Coast Avifauna no. 18, 1927, p. 138) have summarized the occurrence of this species by citing earliest and latest dates of record as September 5 and the "latter part of April." Grinnell (Auk, xxviii, 1911, p. 299) described the fall movement of mockingbirds from the interior valleys of California to the coastal region and attributed the movement to the relatively higher temperature in winter near the coast compared with that of the interior. In spring and summer the interior is much warmer than the coast and, according to him, in response to temperature the mockingbirds return to the interior, thus failing to breed along the coast in central California. Factors other than temperature seem to have increased the number of mockingbirds in the Sacramento and San Joaquin valleys during the past twenty years as these valleys have been extensively cultivated and in many places planted to orchards. It is significant, therefore, to observe the conditions attending natural experiments in the invasion of the San Francisco Bay district during the breeding season by this species. Edge (Condor, xxxiii, 1931, p. 75) has reported the taking of a mocker at Healdsburg, Sonoma County, on August 17, 1930. This specimen which is in worn juvenal plumage suggests that mockingbirds may breed at this locality. Healdsburg, however, is fairly well shut off from the cooling effect of the coast, and one might well expect the mockingbird to invade this region as a breeding form.

On February 17, 1930, at Solano and Thirty-seventh streets, Richmond, Contra Costa County, a single mockingbird was seen and heard by the writer, singing its full spring song from the top of a telegraph pole. This neighborhood is a partly built-up residential district with acacia trees along the streets and many grassy fields between the houses. Mockingbirds were looked for casually several times later in the 1930 season but were not seen again. However, on March 27, 1931, a pair of mockingbirds was discovered by Mr. Dean Blanchard and myself a quarter of a mile east of the point where the one bird was observed in 1930. This pair fed along the gutters and in the acacia trees and gave no sign of breeding activity except that the two birds were constantly near one another.

A week later apparently the same pair was watched building a nest in an acacia at the corner of Thirty-fifth and Esmond streets. One bird carried sticks while the other accompanied it and sang occasionally. On April 19, Blanchard climbed to the nest and found that it contained two eggs. A second nest was found on the same

morning at Thirty-sixth and Garvin streets, 150 yards distant from the first nest. All four birds were seen within a few minutes. This second nest was being built by both birds of the pair and like the first was situated in an acacia. It was only one hundred yards distant from the place where the bird was seen in 1930 and suggests that the mockingbirds may have nested here in 1930 even though I did not find them.

On May 5 the second nest contained four incubated eggs whereas something had destroyed the first nest, removing almost the entire structure. The first pair was still present, however, and on May 7 was seen building another nest not far away. The four eggs in the nest at Thirty-sixth and Garvin streets were hatching on the morning of May 10 and on May 12 one of the four young was preserved for record (no. 57966, Mus. Vert. Zool.). The female was brooding the young closely on this last visit to the nest, the whole region being swept by a strong wind and a low fog coming from the nearby bay.

It is difficult to believe that temperature in itself is the only important factor limiting the distribution of the mockingbird in central California. This locality at Richmond is well exposed to cold winds during the spring and summer. Many points within the San Francisco Bay region are warmer at this season than this particular spot where the mockers have established a breeding outpost. I believe that the nature of the acacia trees and fields, which seem to be identical with conditions in certain places in southern California where mockingbirds abound, may have induced winter stragglers to remain and nest. It remains to be seen whether the mockingbirds can maintain their foothold in this region.—ALDEN H. MILLER, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, May 12, 1931.*

Unique Nesting Site of Santa Cruz Chickadees.—One morning early in May, 1931, while walking through the Whale Court, at the California Academy of Sciences, Golden Gate Park, my attention was attracted by some Santa Cruz Chickadees (*Parus rufescens barlowi*) that were collecting insects among the vines on the whale

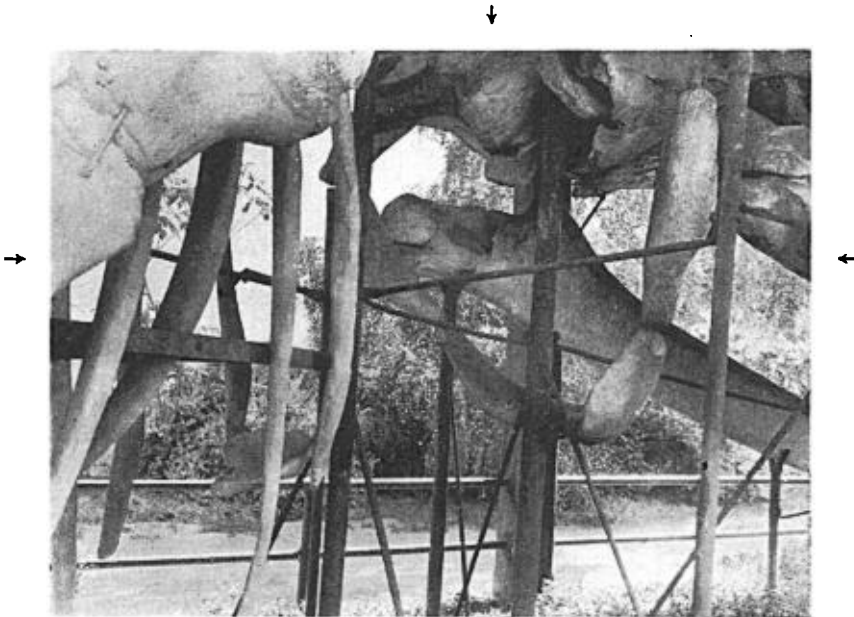


Fig. 53. NEST OF SANTA CRUZ CHICKADEE IN MANDIBULAR FORAMEN OF SULPHUR-BOTTOM WHALE; CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, SAN FRANCISCO, MAY 9, 1931. LOCATION OF NEST INDICATED BY ARROWS.