

Nyctea nyctea. Snowy Owl. Several specimens were secured during the year. One taken on November 4, 1929, was heavily barred. Probably nests.

Hirundo erythrogaster. Barn Swallow. It is indeed interesting that in a single year's collecting at random such a straggler as this should be taken. One was secured on June 14, 1930. The tail of this specimen is noticeably short, measuring only 68 mm. It appears to be an adult. I sent this bird to Dr. Harry C. Oberholser of the Biological Survey, Washington, D. C., for final identification. Dr. Oberholser in his letter says: "The female nearly always has a shorter tail than the male and apparently your specimen is one of the former sex."

Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, November 13, 1931.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

A Bat-eating Sparrow Hawk.—In the depths of the Grand Cañon of the Colorado, a Desert Sparrow Hawk (*Falco sparverius phalaena*) was seen to pursue, capture, and devour a small bat. This occurred at 4:35 p. m., October 30, 1930, in the inner cañon of Hermit Creek, about sixty feet above the stream bed and at a point directly below Hermit Camp, elevation 3000 feet. Mr. Ben H. Thompson also witnessed the incident.

The little inner gorge was in shadows, though the sun still brightened the plateau above. The hawk flew low over the edge of the plateau, and while under observation it was seen to be pursuing a small fluttering object which I instantly took to be a bird. My immediate thought was to make sure that it was a sparrow hawk thus engaged in so unorthodox a pursuit. My field glasses were trained on the hawk and followed it while it dived at its prey, which proved to be a small bat. It dived repeatedly, not following the bat about, but striking at it and then gaining a little height before bearing down again. Once, however, it followed the bat into the overhanging recess toward which it was retreating and chased it out again. At about the seventh attempt, the little bat was caught in its talons and carried to the top of the ledge over the recess. The bird remained there for about two minutes, picked at its prize a couple of times and then flew to a rock on the plateau above. In flight, the sparrow hawk was silhouetted against the evening sky and its extended talons could plainly be seen clutching the body of the little bat whose wings appeared to be folded.

On the rock the sparrow hawk proceeded to consume its prey. Once Mr. Thompson saw three or four inches of entrails dangling from its beak. The process of eating took about three to five minutes. A little later the sparrow hawk opened its mouth wide and disgorged a small piece of something, we could not tell what. When the chase occurred it was still daylight, but by now it was beginning to get dusky. The sparrow hawk flew over the little gorge once more but did not hesitate, and passed out of sight over the hill. The bluish wings and red tail with strongly marked black terminal band showed it to be a male.

Because the bat appeared to be of a uniformly silver gray color and of such very small size, I believe that it was the Canyon Bat (*Pipistrellus hesperus hesperus*), rather than the Little Pallid Bat which is also found in the Grand Cañon. However, this cannot be asserted with any degree of finality.

This occurrence is noted in detail because the known natural enemies of bats are few.—GEORGE M. WRIGHT, *Berkeley, California, October 12, 1931.*

Bird-eating Ground Squirrels.—I do not know in just what year I made the following observation, probably 1903, but it does not matter. I was doing a little collecting on the plains just northeast of Colorado Springs that spring, and on the way to my traps walked along a road bordered by uncultivated ground, and beside which was a telephone line with several wires. Pale striped ground squirrels (*Citellus tridecemlineatus pallidus*) lived in holes on this land and I often noticed feathers, usually of Horned Larks (*Otocoris alpestris leucolaema*), near the holes and wondered if the squirrels had caught the birds and how.

One day the conundrum was answered for me. As I walked along the road a small flock of Horned Larks flew up; one struck a wire and fluttered down to the ground near some of the burrows. I walked over to it and found it dead. It seemed to me that this explained how the squirrels obtained their fresh meat, and certainly no blame could be laid on them for taking advantage of their opportunities. I was pleased to find that the squirrels had probably not been stalking and catching the birds themselves, though they may have killed wounded birds.—EDWARD R. WARREN, 1511 Wood Avenue, Colorado Springs, Colorado, October 26, 1931.

Requiem for the White-tailed Kites of Santa Clara Valley.—From observations made in 1928 (Condor, xxxii, 1930, pp. 221-239) the writer estimated that there were possibly sixteen to twenty White-tailed Kites (*Elanus leucurus majusculus*) in the Santa Clara Valley, located in four areas. This day (October 30, 1931) there cannot be more than two or three, and all too possibly none! From the four areas noted above, Kites have definitely gone from two, their presence in the third is improbable, and in the fourth there cannot be more than two and even these at this moment may no longer exist.

Field work from the State College at San Jose carries competent bird observers frequently into nearly all the country from which Kites have ever been reported or in which Kites could possibly exist. Furthermore these observers are *looking* for Kites and therefore the records here given will be mournfully accurate as evidence of the passing of this most characteristic bird from one of its last strongholds in the west. The last record of the White-tailed Kite, as listed in the publication cited above, was on January 25, 1930, in the Arroyo Calero, about ten miles south of San Jose. Birding trips have been made into this Arroyo not less than six times since, but no Kite has been observed.

The breeding ground of 1928 in the Evergreen region, a locality that had three known nests and at least eight birds at that time, was revisited for the first time on February 16, 1930—no Kites! The same region was visited again on April 15, 1930—again no Kites! On September 6, 1930, this region was visited yet again, with the same result. On this occasion Mr. Earland Whaley, a relative of the owner of the property, reported that a single Kite was observed here in 1929, but that none was noted on the nesting grounds. Visits on several occasions in 1931 have all furnished the same sad news—no Kites.

A prolonged and careful birding trip into the region of Loyola Corners and the Los Altos Country Club, and the hills south of Los Altos, a region that has given Kite records on many other occasions, failed to show an individual on March 22, 1930, and no records have since come from there.

Two students of mine reported a White-tailed Kite flying over the San Benito River south of Gilroy on May 2, 1930. No records have come from there since and personal journeys through this region have not shown Kites.

One region only remains in which Kite records have been made with reasonable regularity. This is the valley area lying between San Jose and the Bay. Here Kites have been recorded as follows: March 22, 1930, a single individual; May 22 to June 13, 1930, Kites frequently seen, once three individuals (reported by Alfred Kopp); August 30, 1930, two individuals; September 9 and 14, 1930, two individuals (reported by Albert Ross McDonald); December 20, 1930, four individuals (reported by Emily Smith); May 16, 1931, one individual (reported by Wallace Brierly); July 28, 1931, two individuals; October 3, 1931, one individual (reported by H. G. Hill). These reports of 1931 undoubtedly refer to a single pair of Kites. And so, from a possible sixteen to twenty Kites in 1928, we are forced to estimate that for the entire valley there are now probably not more than two.

There are a few faint rays of hope. First of all, Earland Whaley tells me that the season of 1928 was the first that Kites occupied the area where the several nests of that year were located. They were absent from that vicinity the following year. Can it be that Kites move about in their semi-communal breeding habits and that they now are occupying some foothill region away from roads and observing eyes? The hope is faint. Again that region of the Santa Cruz Mountains that lies to the southwest of Los Altos, a region once favored by Kites, could be more thoroughly explored. Perhaps Kites may still be there.

What has taken the Kites? Between 1928 and 1931 there can have been no marked increase in gunners in this fully settled region. There has been no alteration of breed-