

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-

ing habitats. There is therefore no conclusive evidence, though this point of more than passing interest should be made. The Kites have disappeared from the hills and are persisting in the single lower valley region previously occupied by them. It would seem that the destructive factor lies in the foothills. At the risk of reasoning that may be but remotely circumstantial if not entirely fallacious, one may mention that there are no squirrels to be poisoned in the lower valley, but formerly there were many in the foothills. Can there be a relation between the poisoning of the California ground squirrel and the passing of the White-tailed Kite?—GAYLE PICKWELL, *State College, San Jose, California, October 30, 1931.*

Small Pools Dangerous to Cormorants.—On the morning of September 26, 1931, while walking up Susan River, I saw a Farallon Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus albociliatus*) in a small pool about one mile west of Susanville, California. Its plumage was that of an immature bird, dull black and brown. The pond is about four feet deep and not more than fifteen feet in diameter. As I came up to the pond the cormorant was underneath the water catching a fish. When it came to the surface and saw me it coughed up the fish which was about eight inches long. It swam nervously about the pond, frequently diving and swimming under-water. I tossed in a few rocks which caused it to dive more frequently. It did not fly. I returned in about three-quarters of an hour and found it resting on a board sticking six inches out of the water. It took to the water and swam about again.

Twenty-five feet up-stream is an old dam with a longer stretch of smooth water. Perhaps the cormorant flew down to this water and followed the water over the rocks to the smaller pool from where it could not fly. The next day it was not there.

On September 29, by a small pool of the river in Susanville, I found a dead immature cormorant with a stick run through its body. Perhaps it was prompted to enter the pool, from which it could not arise when it was later molested. Small boys probably killed it.—DONALD THOMAS MCLAUGHLIN, *Lassen Union High School and Junior College, Susanville, California.*

Two New Records for the Lassen Peak Region.—While engaged in an investigation of the California Quail in the foothill region east of Red Bluff, California, two specimens were taken upon which the following new records for the Lassen Peak region are based.

California Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*). On the morning of July 14, 1930, while writing notes in my shack, a cuckoo was heard calling in some tall cottonwoods along a small stream about 300 yards away. Earlier that morning I had been reading the account of the Road-runner in the galley proof of the Vertebrate Natural History of Lassen Peak Region (Grinnell, *et al.*, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 35, 1930, p. 232) and, upon hearing this cuckoo, remembered that I had seen no mention of the species in this report. A hurried check-up revealed that it was not included, so I immediately set out to collect the bird. Typical of cuckoo nature it was elusive and only after considerable stalking, at times during which it seemed that this record was certainly not going to be made, was I successful in collecting the bird. It was the only cuckoo seen or heard during the three months (May 15 to August 15) that I was in this region.

Paine Creek at this point follows a small well-watered valley which, with the brushy and tree studded banks of the stream, offers a habitat characteristic of the cuckoo's general range. However, a few miles down stream the creek passes through a dry and rocky region that isolates this habitat from any similar one. This specimen is now in the collection of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, University of California, catalogue number 58053, collector's original number 962; female with ovaries enlarged; collected, July 14, 1930, three miles west of Payne Creek Post Office, Tehama County, California.

Hutton Vireo (*Vireo huttoni huttoni*). One specimen, Museum of Vertebrate Zoology number 58056, collector's number 1154, male, taken February 15, 1931, at 1200 feet altitude, three miles west of Payne Creek Post Office, Tehama County, California. This species was relatively common at this time, a dozen or more individuals being seen during the three mornings that I was in the field, although none was observed during the three months of the previous summer in the same neighborhood. This record is of especial interest since it serves to establish a connecting link be-