FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Magpie Spends Winter at Florence Lake.—It was in October of 1931 that I saw, for the first time, an American Magpie (*Pica pica hudsonia*). For three days a bird stayed in a grove of trees just back of our home, here at Florence Lake, Big Creek, California. Often during the spring and autumn months I see birds that one does not expect to see in this vicinity. I list them as "migrants", for future reference, but do not become unduly excited over their visits. So, when this same fellow, or another of its kind, appeared on October 1, 1932, it never occurred to me that it would remain for any length of time. But all during that month I would no more than write down, "date last seen," than the bird would reappear. During the latter part of October and fore part of November there was a period of about two weeks that we did not see the magpie at all. Some of its longer tail feathers were missing so that we were able to know it was the same individual that was here, off and on.

At this time our coyotes, that had become partially tame the previous winter, began coming irregularly for our hand-outs. By the middle of November they again came daily. And with them came Skäta (Swedish for magpie). The moment the "pups" came running in response to our call, Skäta came winging from the same direction. As we tossed the food, the bird would land near and try to pick it up before the coyotes reached it.

Sometimes Skäta succeeded and it was amusing to watch the bird doing its best to fly with a piece that was all but too large for it to handle. Often the piece of food proved too unwieldy and before the bird could again pick it up one of the pups would grab it. Other times Skäta managed to flounder with the food to a tree, there to eat in peace.

All winter it was nip and tuck between the coyotes and the magpie. If the former were the winners, Skäta would follow one or the other to their favorite feeding spots. There the bird would alight on the snow a few feet away and await its chance to make a dash for a bite. More often it followed Tom and frequently was less than a foot from this coyote's nose.

None of the coyotes offered to harm the magpie, though Dick and Nelly would chase it away if it came too close, while Tom did not seem to mind in the least sharing his food with his feathered friend.

Incidentally, after observing our coyotes these two years, we have serious doubts that they are enemies, to any great extent, of bird life. Our nutcrackers, Blue-fronted Jays, juncos, Brewer and Red-winged blackbirds settle on the coyotes' feeding ground to pick up crumbs. Not yet has a coyote shown the least intention or desire of killing them. The birds feed all about and among them quite unconcernedly. Surely coyotes never had a better chance to dine off birds than ours have on their feeding ground here. I am sure a dog would be more apt to harm the birds if they attempted to take its food away.

For some reason or other the magpie preferred dining with the coyotes rather than its own feathered folk. The bird tables and suet posts, provided with about the same kind of food given pups, are on the opposite side of the house from the space where we have trained the coyotes to come for their food. The coyotes never come to the birds' side. Less than a dozen times did Skäta come there for food, and then only on the mornings when it was storming so hard that the pups did not move about.

When the coyotes finished and went off over the hill, Skäta would fly after them. We wondered if the bird also got a share of the natural food which they obtained.

March third we saw the magpie for the last time and we feel certain that it then returned to its true home. Because of its being near the house when the coyotes were, we were unable to trap and band it.—LILA M. LOFBERG, *Florence Lake, Big Creek, California, April 20, 1933.*

Records of some Birds New to the Mexican State of Sonora.—In 1931 Mr. J. T. Wright made a small collection of about three hundred skins while traveling through Sonora, most of which were later purchased by Dr. L. B. Bishop, although a few were otherwise disposed of. The present writer worked at several mainland points between Guaymas and Tepopa Bay in late December, 1931, and early January, 1932, and finally Mr. Chester Lamb took a few specimens in the central part of the state in the winter of 1932-1933. These collections contain many valuable data on distribution and have

helped materially in outlining the ranges of several species and subspecies. In addition, thirteen species were collected or noted which have heretofore escaped notice, at least so far as published records are concerned. An annotated list of these is given below.

It may be of interest to mention that at present the list of Sonora birds, based on published data available to me, stands at 457 species and subspecies, though some of the records are obviously impossible and others are varyingly unsatisfactory. Besides the above there are numerous others which have been collected but never reported upon and which are not available for use at this time. In this connection I wish to thank Dr. Bishop for placing, unsolicited, all of his specimens at my disposal.

Puffinus opisthomelas. About a dozen Black-vented Shearwaters were noted singly on the afternoon of December 26, 1931, as we were sailing up the coast from San Pedro Nolasco Island to Kino Bay. Most of these crossed the bow at a range close enough to be sure of their identity. It is probable that several of the species of shearwaters which occur off the California coast will sooner or later be detected in the Gulf; indeed two species other than the Black-vented were seen by us on the above date, though at such range that their identity could only be surmised.

Pelecanus erythrorhynchos. A single White Pelican was seen at Tepopa Bay on January 2, 1932. Mr. A. W. Anthony tells me that he saw a flock of forty-two at El Golfo on November 24, and that the species was "common" at Estrada de Tasiola on December 4, 1930.

Casmerodius albus egretta. American Egrets were noted personally in Guaymas Harbor, December 23, 1931, and at Tepopa Bay on January 2, 1932. Lamb saw a flock of ten on the Rio Sonora near Hermosillo on December 27, 1932.

Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis. Several Louisiana Herons were seen on the tide flats in front of the hotel in Guaymas on December 23, 1931.

Nyctanassa violacea bancrofti. Yellow-crowned Night Herons were common in the growth bordering tidal lagoons at Tepopa Bay where, on January 2, 1932, they were flocking with other herons such as *Egretta thula brewsteri* and *Dichromanassa rufescens dickeyi.* The single specimen taken is typical of this race.

Guara alba. White Ibises were not uncommon at Tepopa Bay on January 2, 1932.

Dendrocygna autumnalis autumnalis. Two Black-bellied Tree-ducks in the Bishop collection were taken by Wright at Camoa on June 3, 1931.

Nyroca americana. Lamb noted a single Redhead on a small rainwater pond at San Jose de Guaymas on January 13, 1933.

Numenius americanus americanus. Long-billed Curlews were present in small numbers at San Carlos, Kino and Tepopa bays between the dates of December 24, 1931, and January 2, 1932. Lamb notes a flock feeding on the plain near Querobabi on December 6, 1932, and also mentions the species as at San Jose de Guaymas on January 19, 1933. While there is every probability that both forms of the Long-billed Curlew occur in Sonora, the only specimen taken (Kino Bay, December 27, 1931) is an extreme of the typical race.

Phalaropus fulicarius. On December 26, 1931, small flocks of Red Phalaropes were noted at frequent intervals along the coast from San Pedro Nolasco Island to Kino Bay. Some of the birds remained on the water until almost touched by the bow of our boat and hence identification was reasonably certain.

Larus glaucescens. Among a group of gulls working over some fish remains on the beach at San Pedro Bay on December 25, 1931, was a single adult Glaucous-winged Gull. Although known to be a fairly common winter visitant on the Lower California side of the Gulf, the present instance appears to be the first recorded occurrence for the Sonora side.

Larus occidentalis wymani. An adult Wyman Gull was seen at San Pedro Bay on December 25, 1931. This bird was on the beach shingle in company with a dozen or more Yellow-footed Gulls and was under observation for nearly an hour at distances as close as six feet. Unfortunately I had expended all ammunition and had no means of collecting the bird, but since the only means of distinguishing adult *wymani* from adult *livens* is the color of the legs and feet in life there is no reason to question the identification.

Seiurus motacilla. Wright took a single Louisiana Water-thrush at Guirocoba on March 23, 1931. This appears to be not only the first record for Sonora but the

second for the Pacific coast of North America. The specimen is now number 48238 of the Bishop collection.—A. J. VAN ROSSEM, *California Institute of Technology, Pasadena, California, May 2, 1933.*

Behavior of Birds during the Long Beach Earthquake, March 10, 1933.—The first shock, and the only really severe one, came at approximately 5:55 p. m. Minor shocks followed at such short intervals for twenty hours that it seemed to me as if the earth was in continual motion. Although it was about sunset at the time of the first shock, and not yet dark, a flock of a hundred Brewer Blackbirds (*Euphagus cyanocephalus*) had retired to their roost in some nearby medium-height trees. While we felt no preliminary shocks, these birds became uneasy just before the severe shock. During the shock, the birds began leaving the roost, rising slowly into the air above the trees, and milling about uncertainly in twenty-foot ascending spirals. The first severe shock lasted about eleven seconds, but the blackbirds continued to rise for about ten seconds longer. Then, they had reached the height of about one hundred feet above the trees, and perhaps one hundred and forty feet above the ground. From that elevation they descended slowly to their roost, and settled rather noisily. During the minor shocks that came all night long, there was no noticeable disturbance, either among these birds or among other birds in my neighborhood. Apparently all birds remained asleep, or at least quietly on their roosts, or in their usual sleeping places. At the usual time near dawn, meadowlarks and mockingbirds began to sing. They kept up their morning songs in spite of the tremors that were occurring practically every minute.—M. P. SKINNER, *1316 Harding St., Long Beach, California, April 24, 1933.*

Relationships of Coues and Olive-sided Flycatchers.—In the fourth edition of the A. O. U. Check-list, as in the third, the Olive-sided Flycatcher occupies the monotypic genus *Nuttallornis*, while Coues Flycatcher and the several wood pewees are placed together in *Myiochanes*. At an earlier date they were all together in the one genus *Contopus*. In the *Auk* for October, 1899 (XVI, pp. 330-337), Dr. H. C. Oberholser published "A synopsis of the genus Contopus and its Allies," in which he proposed an arrangement essentially similar to the one now in use, the Olive-sided Flycatcher in the genus *Nuttallornis*, the others in *Horizopus*. It was, I suppose, Ridgway's procedure in his "Birds of North and Middle America" (IV, 1907, pp. 509-529) that inaugurated the substitution of *Myiochanes* for *Horizopus*.

It is stated by Oberholser that "*Nuttallornis* Ridgway, proposed in subgeneric sense for *Contopus borealis*, is, by reason of very pronounced characters, without doubt of generic rank." These characters (which I do not dispute) are given as follows: "Resembling *Horizopus*, but tarsi shorter than middle toe with claw; wing exceeding tail by about one-half the length of latter; rictal bristles less developed (actually as well as comparatively shorter than in *Horizopus virens*); first primary longer than the fourth." Ridgway (*op. cit.*, p. 504) characterizes *Nuttallornis* as: "With tail only one-third as long as wing, tarsus only one-seventh as long as wing and decidedly shorter than middle toe with claw, and with a conspicuous patch of white silky feathers on each side of rump." *Myiochanes* (pp. 509-510) is characterized in minute detail but mostly in comparison with *Blacicus*. *Nuttallornis*, obviously, is dismissed as clearly distinct without question.

The Olive-sided Flycatcher is a common bird over much of North America. Most observers are in some measure familiar with it, if not on the breeding grounds at least as a migrant. Coues Flycatcher is of more southern distribution, extending northward in summer only as far as the mountains of Arizona and New Mexico, and relatively few American ornithologists have seen the living bird. I think that I would be safe in asking those few if they did not agree with me that the Olive-sided Flycatcher and Coues Flycatcher, like "the Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady," are sisters under their skins. Every action proclaims the close relation of the two and their similar un-likeness to the wood pewees. The clear, ringing note of the Olive-sided Flycatcher ("Give *me* beer," it has been rendered) is slightly varied in Coues Flycatcher (the Mexicans call the bird "José Maria"); the intonation is exactly the same. Both habitually perch on towering tree tops,