

ness he stalked his prey along the shallow margin of the channel. The personification of stealth was pictured in his every movement. He moves forward with stately grace, each measured step paced with caution. He suddenly freezes, and now one can almost sense the gleam of his piercing eye. Cautiously, slowly he stretches his long neck forward, a foot is lifted, it moves, one stride forward, perhaps two strides. And now he assumes the out-stretched attitude of frozen eagerness. With perfect balance, without a flicker of movement he holds this pose until sure of his kill. A flash of gleaming whiteness, an upward toss of his head, a gulp or two and down goes the latest victim of his uncanny skill. Perhaps he shakes his feathers out a bit and he may reach down his long bill to adjust a feather or two. He now lifts high his head and looks about before moving on to the site of his next kill.

Then there is the little Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*) who stalks the pools that lay scattered over the mudflats. No pool is too small to receive his attention. Walking slowly and quietly with a dignified stride, but lacking the stealthy alertness of the American Egret, the Snowy moves along. He is foraging and when he comes to a likely looking puddle he reaches one foot gently forward and with toes outspread he softly pats the surface of the pool. In this gentle way, without muddying the water, he stirs up any small fish that may be hiding in the pool, and in the clear water he is able to see and spear his fleeing victim. This foraging maneuver was about as clever a thing as I ever saw a bird do. He reached out so deliberately and patted so gently, and with his patting foot directly under his bill he was ready to strike with precision.

Besides these three there was the "Interloper"—a stranger from a foreign land who did not really belong on the mudflats of Mission Bay. When first seen he was quarreling with the Snowy Egret. He would crouch low, lean forward and out-stretch his neck, ruffle his shoulder feathers and run toward the Egret. Occasionally as he drew near the Snowy he would leap into the air and strike with his wings. In this manner, the Snowy retreating and the Interloper pursuing, the birds crossed a hundred yards of mudflat and then the Snowy took wing. The Interloper, not satisfied, continued the pursuit. He was the larger and the stronger on the wing. The Snowy was forced to dodge, turn, and dive as the birds winged far over the mudflats. Finally the two birds disappeared in the distance.

Ten minutes later the Interloper came sliding down the breeze to the section of the mudflat where he was originally seen. Now, no longer forced to share his feeding ground, he immediately started to forage. Again we were thrilled; never before had we seen a heron-like bird forage in such a strange manner. Instead of the slow stealthy movements of most herons this bird fairly raced about. His slowest movements were paced in a hurried trot, but most often he ran at a more rapid gait. But not only that, often when racing through a shallow pool he would leap into the air, turn about and land, racing in the opposite direction. Seemingly his method was to stir the fish into action and then to spear them on the run.

In his odd manner of foraging the Interloper covered much territory. When running he held his neck in a close S-shaped crook and this attitude coupled with his sudden upward leaps and his quick jerky side-steps gave to his hunting performance a most ludicrous aspect. Really he was an acrobat of parts. [The "Interloper" turned out to be the Louisiana Heron (*Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*), a rare visitor to California recorded a few times from the vicinity of San Diego.]—CHAS. W. MICHAEL, *Yosemite, California, June 4, 1934.*

Notes on the Nesting of the Band-tailed Pigeon.—There are a number of recorded instances of the nesting of the Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*) in the higher country of California; still a few notes on breeding in the lower elevations may prove of interest. In Pacific Coast Avifauna number 21, by George Willett, there is a record of the breeding of this bird as noted by me in the Oak Knoll district of Pasadena. This I thought, at the time (1928) an unusual occurrence. Since the date of finding that nest, I have been able further to observe the breeding habits of this pigeon in California.

My notes record the finding, on June 18, 1932, of a nest containing one newly hatched young on the Spring Valley Water Company property in San Mateo County. The nest was placed about twenty feet up in a redwood in a heavily wooded gulch directly to the westward of San Andreas Lake. While I searched diligently for other

nests, I was able to locate only this one on the water company's land, even though several different days were spent afield in this quest.

In company with Dr. Ralph A. Woods of Los Angeles, a day was spent in the vicinity of Calabasas, Los Angeles County, chiefly looking for nests of raptors. In a grove of small scrubby live oaks, a nest containing one pipped egg of a Band-tailed Pigeon was found. The nest was typically constructed, being placed about fifteen feet up on a horizontal limb. The female flushed from the nest and was not seen or heard again while we remained at the site. Mr. W. J. Sheffler of Los Angeles informs me that several years ago while hunting in this vicinity in the autumn, he noted old pigeon nests. Incidentally, a ranchman with whom Dr. Woods and I talked on March 19, 1934 (the date of discovery of this nest) declared that "several" years ago there were a number of birds on his place throughout the year, but that he had not seen any since that time. Had this female not noisily flushed from her nest, I would not have known a pigeon was in the canyon, for no sign of another individual was seen or heard.

A comparison of breeding dates seems of interest. In contrast with the early nesting at Calabasas, in March, and the June date from San Mateo County, I have other dates in my notes from the Sierra Nevada, notably from Lopez Flat on the Tejon Ranch, Kern County, in the Tehachapi Range (one egg fresh, on May 27, 1928), and from the upper Tule Canyon, Tulare County (one well-fledged young in nest on July 28, 1926).—J. STUART ROWLEY, *Athambra, California, June 14, 1934.*

Magpie Spends Second Winter at Florence Lake.—On December 3, 1933, the first of our partly tame coyotes returned for the winter. This was Tom, who had been with us the two previous winters. And with him on the feeding ground that very first morning was Skäta, a Black-billed Magpie (*Pica pica hudsonia*) (see Condor, 35, 1933, p. 198)—if not Skäta, at least one of her kind. From its actions we felt sure it was the same individual that had spent the previous winter with us, sharing this same coyote's food.

The winter of 1933-34 was quite the mildest we have seen at Florence Lake, and the coyotes (Tom, Nelly and Lobo, a new one—Dick failed to return) did not find it necessary to depend so much upon the food we furnished for them. However, they came every day or so and Skäta was always with them when they came, and left when they left. Not once did this magpie feed with the birds on the side of the house opposite from the pups' feeding ground.

Nelly and Lobo were mates and while they made no attempt to kill this bird they showed quite plainly they did not care to share food with it. However, Tom was, as usual, hospitable, and throughout the winter the coyote and the magpie dined side by side. But again when March arrived, Skäta left the coyote companion, probably to join her fellow-magpies on the "east-side" somewhere.—LILA M. LOFBERG, *Big Creek, California, April 25, 1934.*

Miscellaneous Notes on Birds of the Sacramento Valley.—During many field trips of the past three seasons I have entered in my notebooks several records that appear to warrant publication. No extensive search of the literature concerning the species mentioned has been made, but these observations appear to add to the picture of each of these birds.

Gallinula chloropus cachinnans. Florida Gallinule. Listed both by Hoffmann and in the more recent A. O. U. Check-list as wintering "from southern California southward". Florida Gallinules are really regular winter residents of all parts of the Sacramento Valley rice-growing area. I have definite dates of their occurrence covering each of the winter months in Butte, Glenn, Colusa, Yuba, Sutter, and Yolo counties. They do not appear to winter in large numbers, but one or more individuals can be located practically any day during the winter by a few minutes scouting along the canals or sloughs. My most recent record was that of a pair noted by Warden Black and the writer on the St. Germain Gun Club, Suisun marshes, December 18, 1933.

Dendrocygna bicolor helva. Fulvous Tree-duck. Two specimens of the Fulvous Tree-duck were killed on the Spalding Ranch Gun Club, near Willows, California, by H. Joseph. The last of the two, killed about November 21, 1933, was mounted and is