

Now, with the above opinions before me, and after an examination just made of all the molothrine material in the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology (166 skins) in connection with the Dickey-van Rossem description, I am compelled to conclude that *californicus* is not usefully recognizable, having been based upon a sort of mosaic of intergrades. Indeed, this situation is quite what the reader gathers from the remarks of the authors of this name, themselves. To re-state the case as I now see it, I could do no better than use the words quoted above from Willett.

To return to the two birds from Oakland, the measurements I give above show the female to be even smaller than the average of a Colorado River valley series (for measurements of this, see Grinnell, Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., 12, 1914, pp. 159-160). The male, however, is larger with respect to wing and tail than any Colorado River example, but is identical in size with specimens from Owens Valley, these latter clearly being intergradient between *artemisiae* and *obscurus*. As to coloration, the female is a bit more slaty in its dark tones than Colorado Valley examples, but the latter, even of approximately the same season, are obviously more worn; as is well known, progressing wear carries gray toward brown. I cannot see that the obscure, narrow streaking below is any more emphasized than in some southeastern birds. In the male the brown color of the head is darker than in most Colorado River males, and there is a faint iridescent "wash" over it; but I suspect that a little wear and fading from strong sunlight would reduce these features to a perfectly equivalent condition.

To repeat, then, the newly-acquired specimens from the San Francisco Bay region would seem to decide the name Dwarf Cowbird (*Molothrus ater obscurus*) as the one best to use for the race of that area along with western and southern California generally.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 10, 1934.*

The Cowbird Breeds in Berkeley.—On June 9, 1934, we captured a young Cowbird (*Molothrus ater obscurus*) near Sather Gate on the University of California campus. It was being attended by a Western Flycatcher (*Empidonax difficilis*). To our knowledge this is the first record of the Cowbird in Berkeley and also the first record of the Western Flycatcher as a host for this species.

We first saw the Cowbird on June 8 in the trees bordering Strawberry Creek. While we were watching it the much smaller Western Flycatcher approached and fed it. Our attempts to capture the fledgling by hand were failures because the young bird flew too well. The Western Flycatcher was most solicitous of its charge, expressing alarm at our presence, driving away a Robin, a Titmouse, and some Bush-tits which were attracted by the fledgling's begging calls, and feeding it at frequent intervals. The flycatcher followed the Cowbird more often than the Cowbird followed the Flycatcher.

The fledgling was a male weighing 26.5 grams. Its gullet and stomach contained a mass of insect remains which included two ladybird beetlets and a syrphid fly. The specimen is now no. 64966 in the collection of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology.—SETH B. BENSON and WARD C. RUSSELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, June 15, 1934.*

The Nesting of the Double-crested Cormorant at Lake Bowdoin, Montana.—Because of a recent inquiry about the breeding of Cormorants in Montana I am placing the following note on record. The first time I visited Lake Bowdoin, June 19 to 22, 1932, and the last time, June 18 to 23, 1933, we found ten or twelve pairs of Double-crested Cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus auritus*) nesting on Woody Island. Probably



Fig. 38. Nestling Double-crested Cormorants at Lake Bowdoin, Montana.

about this many birds have nested on Lake Bowdoin for the past ten or twelve years. The first authentic record that I can find comes from Mr. George E. Mushbach, Superintendent of the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, and dates back to June, 1927. In a recent letter Mr. Mushbach states that in 1927, when at Lake Bowdoin, Mr. L. Minugh, who had been Game Warden on the lake for many years, told him that Cormorants had nested on the lake for a number of years. No specimen has been taken and preserved from Lake Bowdoin, though I have seen several that have been shot during the hunting season. The accompanying picture (fig. 38) should serve as well as a specimen.—V. L. MARSH, *Great Falls, Montana, May 26, 1934.*

The Status of *Phalaropus fulicarius jourdaini* Iredale.—Mr. Tom Iredale's race of *Phalaropus fulicarius* has indeed been unfortunate in its critics! I have just read with interest Mr. J. L. Peters' note in the Condor (36, 1934, p. 85) in which he gives the results of his inquiry into the validity of this form. As far as can be ascertained from this paper the material consisted of birds from Southampton Island, the coast of Labrador, and the west coast of Greenland (all breeding birds). There were also specimens from the Massachusetts coast on spring migration, and others from northeastern Asia and northern Alaska. To which place the East Siberian and Alaska birds belong I am unable to say, as I have never examined series from these localities; but leaving these out of the question, all the material examined belongs to the typical race, and apparently there is not a single specimen of *P. fulicarius jourdaini* among them! The only known breeding places of this race are Spitsbergen, Iceland and the northeast coast of Greenland. Surely before passing judgment on the validity of a form, it is desirable to have specimens available for comparison. The late Mr. E. Lehn Schioler had beautiful series from both the northeast and northwest coasts of Greenland, collected during the breeding season, and every ornithologist who has examined these series has noticed the differences pointed out by Iredale. It is a well known fact that the avifauna of northeastern Greenland is Palearctic, and birds arrive there from the east Atlantic; while the northwestern coast is predominantly Nearctic and breeding birds arrive from the west side of the Atlantic.

That gradual bleaching takes place as summer advances in both forms is admitted, but Colonel Meinertzhagen, who disputed the validity of the new race on the same grounds as Mr. Peters, was forced to propound a theory that the warm current off the east coast induced earlier breeding and bleaching than the cold climate of the west coast of Greenland, to account for the paler color of the east Greenland birds. As this is exactly the reverse of the facts, the northeast coast being icebound with a cold Arctic current, and the west coast ice-free owing to the warm stream from the south, the argument recoils against its author.

Dr. E. Hartert, too, made an unfortunate slip in his *Vögel d. pal. Fauna* (III, 1922, p. 2212) when he stated that pale summer birds had been compared with fresh dark autumn specimens. In autumn this species has of course already assumed its winter plumage. It is only fair to add that at Copenhagen in 1926 he examined Mr. Schioler's series and admitted his mistake, but unfortunately did not live to correct it in his *Ergänzungsband*.

Comparisons based on series of one form only are certainly "misleading and only create erroneous impressions", to quote Mr. Peters' words.

It is perhaps not without interest that while the typical race migrates south at least to the Falklands, the east Atlantic form does not occur south of the equator, while the supposed records for the Indian Ocean are due to confusion with *Phalaropus lobatus*. It has also been recorded from the British Isles in every month of the year except July.—F. C. R. JOURDAIN, *Whitekirk, Southbourne, Bournemouth, England, May 5, 1934.*

Further Comment on *Phalaropus fulicarius jourdaini*.—To Mr. Jourdain's criticism of my disposal of the name *Phalaropus fulicarius jourdaini* Iredale I would reply as follows:

Mr. Jourdain bases his defence of this subspecies chiefly on the fact that I did not have a topotypical specimen at hand. He overlooked my statement, however, (6th line from bottom of third paragraph, p. 85 of this volume of the Condor) that I had