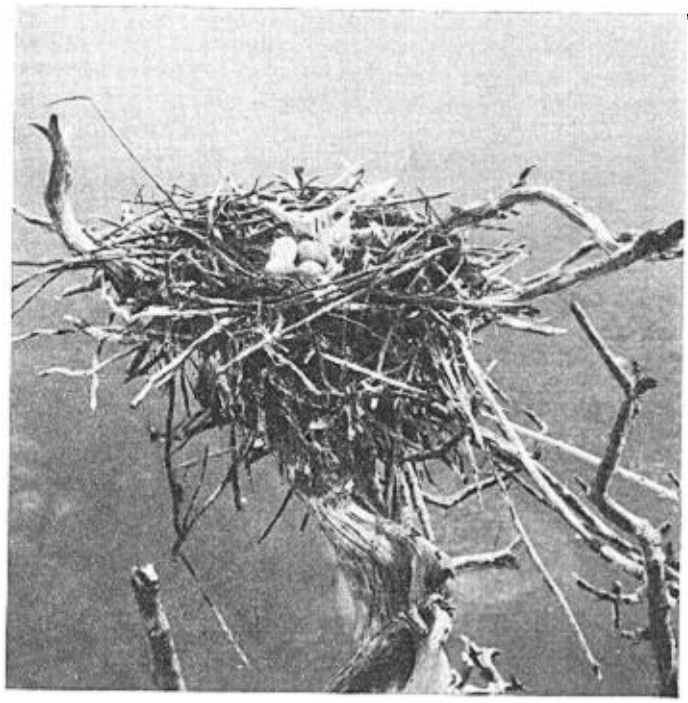

Fig. 52. Nest of White-crested Cormorant in a juniper tree on a rock in Trincomali Channel, British Columbia.

Of other birds, it was estimated that about 200 Glaucous-winged Gulls were present; fifty nests of this species were found on the north, and 35 on the south, rock, all with eggs. One pair of Pigeon Guillemots was suspected of nesting on the north rock and about half a dozen corvine gangsters were carrying on their nefarious work among the birds of both rocks.—G. D. SPROT, *Cobble Hill, Vancouver Island, British Columbia, July 20, 1936.*

Surf Scoter and Caspian Tern in Arizona.—In the Jacot collection of birds acquired by the University of Arizona in 1932, there is a specimen of Surf Scoter (*Melanitta perspicillata*). The bird was taken by Mr. E. C. Jacot at Hillside, Yavapai County, Arizona, on October 20, 1929. It is an adult female, now no. 113 in the University collection. This is believed to be the first record for the State.

On April 30, 1936, the writer was traveling by auto through Yavapai County. As we approached a small reservoir recently formed by a dam across the upper Verde River close beside the highway about twenty miles north of Prescott, we noticed some conspicuously white birds. A stop was made to identify them, and about ten individuals were observed in flight over the small lake. With 8-power binoculars the birds were carefully studied for some time, during which interval a few came close enough to permit of a careful check of their markings.

They were, unmistakably, large terns, and the red beaks, black caps, black feet, black wing tips, and large size were clearly distinguished. I believe they were undoubtedly Caspian Terns (*Hydroprogne caspia imperator*), not hitherto recorded in Arizona. I would hesitate, even so, to present the record without a specimen, were it not for the fact that only two weeks previously I had carefully studied Royal Terns in flight at Puerto Libertad, Sonora, Mexico, so that the differences in the two species were clearly in mind. Two specimens of the Royal Tern were secured at that time. The birds now reported were so much like the Royal Terns in beak, black cap, and black feet, as to be indistinguishable on those points, but the conspicuously dark wing tips, and the large size were distinctive. (Royal Terns in flight overhead appear to have wholly white wings.) That the tail was forked was certain, but sufficiently satisfactory views of spread tails were not secured to determine the degree of forking as compared with the Royal Tern.

Unfortunately, there was no gun in the party and it was impossible to collect a specimen. On the basis of the observations here set forth, however, I present the record for what it is worth. The range of the species is such that its occurrence in Arizona during migration is by no means improbable.—CHARLES T. VORHIES, *University of Arizona, August 10, 1936.*

Poor Selection of Building Sites.—That birds often make mistakes in choosing sites for their nests is well known to egg collectors and to many observers of bird life. An instance of this sort was recently related to me by Mr. W. H. Jilbert of Palo Alto, who, as does his wife, takes a great interest in setting out free rations in their garden for bird visitors. This last spring a pair of San Francisco Brown Towhees (*Pipilo fuscus petulans*) built a nest there, selecting a small apple tree for the site and placing it in a fork a few inches from, and directly under, an apple that was hanging from a small twig. Four eggs were laid in the nest, and incubation commenced. Unfortunately the birds did not realize that the fruit was still growing, and one morning Mrs. Jilbert was greatly disturbed to find that the apple, possibly jarred by one of the birds entering or leaving the nest, had fallen on top of it. On removing the apple the eggs were found intact, but the birds were evidently so discouraged by the incident that they did not return.

This tale brought to mind a case of misplaced confidence on the part of a pair of Song Sparrows that built a nest in a large thistle plant early in May, 1895, and which, when found by the writer, seemed to be in a logical situation. A visit to it a few days later, however, showed that the selection of the site was decidedly a poor one; for the thistle had grown with such rapidity and unevenness that the nest was so tilted as to be unusable for incubating purposes though the eggs were still in the lower edge. It looked as if the birds could easily have woven in some more material on the low side so as to make it safe for use, but no attempt was made to improve matters and the nest was deserted.

A remarkable selection of nesting site was that of a California Quail (*Lophortyx californica*) that scratched out a hollow, in plain sight under the lower end of a one-horse treadmill which, before the days of widespread electric power, was daily used to churn the butter on my dairy in Marin County. The nest side of the churn was only four or five feet from the basement wall of the milk house, leaving a passage-way used by the buttermaker in his duties. In spite of the quail being frightened away every morning by the clattering of the treadmill and often disturbed by someone passing, thirteen eggs were laid before the nest was deserted.

Again, a different but very excusable sort of careless selection was that of a Western House Wren (*Troglodytes aëdon parkmanii*) that built a nest in the end of the exhaust pipe of a temporarily idle stationary steam engine attached to a large pump. Fortunately for the wren I caught sight one day of a bit of twig projecting from the end of the pipe and saved bird and nest from being blown to bits by the first turn over of the engine, which was soon to be put into use, and also saved the five eggs that were in the nest.—JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *California Academy of Sciences, San Francisco, California, August 24, 1936.*

A New Record for Parapavo californicus (Miller).—The vigorous program of road building in southern California has resulted in bringing to light new fossil deposits. The present record is made possible by one such discovery. Mr. F. R. Pracht, State Resident Engineer, and Mr. Charles Reynolds of the R. E. Campbell Contracting Company, recently called the attention of the Los Angeles Museum to scattered fossil remains occurring in gravel beds at a depth of about forty feet, along the Imperial Highway road-cut now under construction southwest of La Habra, near the Los Angeles-Orange county line. These deposits appear to be stream laid and, according to Dr. Chester Stock, include remains of mastodon, ground sloth and horse of Pleistocene age, as well as a few well-worn fragments of shell and fish bone, and a shark tooth, which likely were washed in from an earlier marine deposit.

Of especial interest to me is a well-petrified distal end of radius of a turkey which I believe may be safely assigned to the Pleistocene *Parapavo californicus* on the basis of characters described in an earlier paper (Howard, Univ. Calif. Publ. Geol. Sci., vol. 17, 1927, p. 17, and p. 45, pl. 7) as follows: "Ridge at distal end, external aspect.—(Pl. 7 *d*) . . . ridge paralleling border of shaft and continuous distally with border of scapho-lunar facet, ridge long, most nearly approaching *Agriocharis*; . . ." (2) "Tendinal groove at distal end.—Pl. 7, *e*) Faint notch, not so deep as in *Agriocharis*; in *Meleagris*, broad and shallow . . . ."

This is the first definite record of *Parapavo californicus* outside of the asphalt deposits of Rancho La Brea and Carpinteria.

In connection with this record, I take the opportunity to mention the occurrence of two other specimens of fossil meleagrid which were taken from Pleistocene deposits in a storm drain