FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Feeding Behavior of a Red Phalarope.—It was a lovely sunny day. At twelve noon there was a lone Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) feeding on Gibson Beach in the Point Lobos Reserve. Gibson Beach is a bend of white sand about one hundred yards long and is sheltered by bluffs. This day the sea was calm, with one line of breakers crashing close to the shore.

The lone phalarope was foraging at the high tide mark where there was a line of decaying kelp on which countless sand-fleas were feeding. Wherever the bird found good pickings it would lie flat on its belly and make rapid jabs until the supply was exhausted. The attitude and manner of the bird, the rapid jerking of the head from side to side and the quick jabs, were like those of a phalarope feeding on the surface of a pool. I believe, however, that this manner was not acquired from a habit of feeding on the surface of water, but rather was it a method of trapping its prey. I was so close at times as to see sand-fleas bouncing off from the phalarope's chest. Had the bird been standing, many of these sand-fleas would have escaped, for once out of reach they would disappear like magic into the sand.

With a strange waddling gait and a swaggering hind end the pigeon-toed phalarope would move from kelp heap to kelp heap. Up and down that hundred yards of beach it traveled. Sometimes it would retrace its steps, sometimes it would fly back and start over. On the wing the phalarope was a lovely thing. Pure white when directly overhead—the sky was very blue—and when it glided toward the beach a white bar could be seen along the outspread wing. When the phalarope approached an especially juicy bit of kelp a gush of sand-fleas would explode into the air. Then the bird would belly down and really go to work. When the sand-fleas ceased hopping the phalarope would reach down, grasp a bit of kelp in his mandibles, and give it a vigorous shake to stir up the last remaining sand-fleas.

After two hours and twenty-five minutes of continuous feeding the phalarope flew out to sea and lit on the water just beyond the first breaker. Bobbing like a cork it took a thorough bath and then apparently went to sleep. In eleven minutes it was back on the beach again. How it could hold any more food was a mystery to me, but its appetite was apparently unimpaired. However, in thirty minutes the appetite was satisfied; the phalarope, puffed out like a pouter pigeon, lay down in the sand, tucked its bill in the feathers of its back, and went sound asleep.—CHARLES W. MICHAEL, *Pasadena, California, November 15, 1937.*

New Bird Records for Brewster County, Texas.—During several periods in 1936 and 1937 the writer had opportunity to record birds in the Big Bend area of southern Brewster County, Texas. Among the birds collected or observed are nine species, or subspecies, not recorded in the recent publication by Josselyn Van Tyne and George Miksch Sutton, "The Birds of Brewster County, Texas" (Univ. Michigan, Mus. Zool., Miscellaneous Publ. No. 37, August 24, 1937). The specimens listed below were identified by Dr. Harry C. Oberholser, to whom I express appreciation. The writer is obligated also to Dr. Van Tyne who read the manuscript and offered critical comments. All specimens are in the National Park Service collection at Santa Fe, New Mexico, unless otherwise noted.

Lesser Loon. *Gavia immer elasson.* On October 17, 1937, Mr. A. G. Clark shot a loon of this species on a quiet pool in the Rio Grande near Solis Ranch, elevation 1900 feet. Mr. Clark partially skinned the bird and turned it over to me two days later. The skin is in the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.

Pied-billed Grebe. *Podilymbus podiceps podiceps.* A lone individual observed at close range in a small cattail pond on October 26, and again on October 28, 1937. This pond is located one mile southwest of Boquillas, and about one-fourth mile from the Rio Grande at an elevation of 1850 feet.

Cormorant. *Phalacrocorax.* One observed on a sand bar on the American side of the Rio Grande at 2100 feet elevation near Castolon, March 31, 1936. Considering its small size and the location this was probably the Mexican Cormorant, *P. olivaceus mexicanus,* but since the bird was not collected the species is questionable.

Gadwall. *Chaulelasmus streperus.* On October 24, 1937, a small duck was observed on the cattail pond described above. It obviously lacked vigor and gradually grew weaker, until October 27, when it was found on the bank unable to fly. Upon preparation, it proved to be a female gadwall that appeared to have been wounded internally. The skin is in the University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.

Sora. *Porzana carolina.* One observed on October 26, 27, and 28, 1937, in the cattail pond described above. A rail was also heard calling several times during this period, usually late in the evening.

Eastern Phoebe. *Sayornis phoebe.* On the morning of October 16, 1937, one was observed in a dead willow at Glenn Spring. On October 17, James O. Stevenson called my attention to one near a cattle watering tank at Dugout, and later the same day a female was collected from the top of a bush

(*Leucophyllum*) in a dry wash at the mouth of Pine Canyon, 3700 feet elevation. On October 18, a male was collected from a dead willow near a water tank at Glenn Spring, elevation 2606 feet. One or two birds of this species were observed about a tule pond one mile northwest of Boquillas every day from October 24 to 28, 1937.

Eastern Winter Wren. *Nannus hiemalis hiemalis*. A male was collected on October 22, 1937, at Hot Springs on the Rio Grande. Another winter wren foraged near-by in a pile of drift wood and beneath heavy brush.

Nevada Shrike. *Lanius ludovicianus nevadensis*. A shrike collected near the east base of Burro Mesa, elevation 3500 feet, on March 26, 1937, has been identified by Dr. Oberholser as *nevadensis*. The skin is in the U. S. Bureau of Biological Survey collection, Washington, D. C.

Swamp Sparrow. *Melospiza georgiana*. On October 24, 1937, a male was captured in a mouse trap which had been set among the cattails at the edge of a small pond one mile southwest of Boquillas and one-fourth mile from the Rio Grande.—Adrey E. Borell, *Wildlife Division, National Park Service, January 27, 1938.*

Early Nesting Record of the Coast Bush-tit.—The earliest nesting date that I have for the Coast Bush-tit (*Psaltriparus minimus minimus*) is March 6, 1938. The nest, containing five incubated eggs, was four feet from the ground in a chamise bush on a brush-covered hillside in Reche Canyon, a few miles southeast of Colton, California. The eggs were slightly larger than normal, the weights in grams being 0.88, 0.85, 0.81, 0.79, and 0.78.

My earliest record prior to this one was a set of seven fresh eggs found in Potrero Canyon, near Banning, California, on March 14, 1920. My latest record is June 25, 1929, near Colton, where I found a nest of five eggs along with an egg of the Dwarf Cowbird. This last mentioned nest was badly torn by the cowbird and two of the eggs of the bush-tit had been broken.

My notes concerning thirty-three nests of this form of Bush-tit in San Bernardino and Riverside counties show that usually five to seven eggs are in complete sets and the average is 5.7. The average weight of 188 eggs is 0.75 gram, the largest being 0.94 gram in a set of six eggs and the smallest 0.50 gram in a set of five eggs.—Wilson C. Hanna, *Colton, California, April 12, 1938.*

Red Phalarope at Benicia, California.—On November 2, 1937, Burton Kuntz, a student of the Benicia High School, found a Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) on a street near the shore of Carquinez Straits, in Benicia, Solano County, California. The bird was in a dazed condition and died shortly after it was found. It was brought to me and I have preserved it as a skin. It proved to be a female. The stomach was empty with the exception of a single, small lead shot; there being no indication of bodily injury, this may have caused lead poisoning. Verification of the identification of this skin as that of a Red Phalarope was made by Mr. J. Grinnell at the University of California.

Four days later, November 6, I observed several phalaropes which appeared to be of this species in the waters of Carquinez Straits near the Martinez wharf. The Red Phalarope being a pelagic species, it is possible that the severe storms at the end of October blew a flock of these birds inland. Benicia is a little over forty miles directly east from the seacoast, or, in a northeasterly direction, twenty-five miles from the Golden Gate.—Emerson A. Stoner, *Benicia, California, February 9, 1938.*

Nesting Dates from the Humboldt Bay Region.—Band-tailed Pigeon (*Columba fasciata*). On May 23, 1923, a nest was found in a lowland fir, sixteen feet up. The nest, nicely cupped and made of dry spruce and fir twigs, contained a very young squab. Found in mixed woods, south of Eureka limits. On June 3, 1924, a nest of the same species was found in a lowland fir eight feet up. The nest was a mat of dry spruce twigs and contained a single egg, incubation about a week. Found in woods north of Eureka. On May 23, 1925, another nest was found in a lowland fir, fourteen feet up. The nest was a mat of spruce and fir twigs and contained one egg, incubation about one week. Found in woods north of Eureka. On June 14, 1925, a nest was found in a lowland fir sixteen feet up. This nest was a dirty mat of dry twigs containing a quill-covered squab. Found in woods north of Eureka. Yet another nest was found on July 7, 1925, in a lowland fir, eight feet up. This nest, made of a few dry twigs, contained one egg, incubation about one week. Found in woods north of Eureka. Finally, on June 12, 1926, a Band-tailed Pigeon's nest was found ten feet up in a lowland fir, a dirty mat of spruce and fir twigs containing a feathered squab. Found in woods north of Eureka. An adult pigeon was flushed from each of the above described nests.

On May 7, 1916, a nest of the Coast Pigmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma grinnelli*) was found in a flicker's excavation in a dead spruce, sixteen feet up. It contained five eggs, incubation about a week. Found in woods north of Eureka.

On May 5, 1904, a nest of the Oregon Jay (*Perisoreus obscurus*) was found in a spruce tree, ten feet up. It was made of green moss and dry spruce twigs, damp earth and dead alder strips, thickly