Florida Gallinule on the Suisun Marshes.—While shooting on Simmons Island in the Suisun Bay, on the last day of the hunting season, December 26, 1937, a Benicia hunter killed and brought to Benicia three "large rails" along with his bag of ducks and mud-hens. When he spoke to me about large rails, I immediately became interested, whereupon he kindly invited me to his home where he showed me the birds. They were Florida Gallinules (*Gallinula chloropus cachinnans*); as I had never seen this species before, he gave me the three specimens. I have preserved two of them as scientific skins and the third as a mounted specimen. All of them are males.

This hunter told me that birds of this species appeared to be common on the island named, and that he knew of several hunters who had killed them there, thinking they were rails, and that they considered them very fine eating. The exact location where the three birds were taken was near the mouth of Noyce Slough, on Simmons Island. This island is in Solano County immediately south of Grizzly Island.

Mr. Henry E. Parmenter of San Francisco advises me that on February 19, 1935, he and Mrs. Parmenter saw a single bird of this species on the Suisun Marshes in a small slough entering Montezuma Creek, near Dutton's Landing, a little to the east of Grizzly Island. In view of its presence here on these winter dates this species is no doubt resident on this marsh.—EMERSON A. STONER, *Benicia, California, February 9, 1938.*

Does the Ouzel Use Its Wings in Swimming?—So often have I seen the statement in print that the Water Ouzel (*Cinclus mexicanus*) uses its wings when swimming under water that in spite of my suspicious nature I had almost reached the point of accepting the statement as truth. However, my own observations through the years and my better judgment still make me hesitate and wonder. Could it be possible that John Muir's famous tale of the ouzel is responsible for the building up of a legend? I believe that any ornithologist who has studied the writings of Muir will admit that he was not outstanding as a bird student.

Through the years I have had much opportunity to study the habits of the ouzel, but never did I see it using its wings to forward its underwater progress. Ouzels usually fish in such turbulent waters that it is not possible to study their underwater movements. However, in the Yosemite Valley there did come the opportunity to study the swimming habits of the ouzel under favorable conditions. In this case a pair of ouzels had built their nest in an unusual situation—unusual inasmuch as the nest was placed on a boulder that was completely surrounded by unbroken water. Directly below and in front of the nest there was practically no current. The pool was of varying depth, from two to six feet, and very clear.

During the time that the river was in full spring flood and while the male ouzel was feeding his mate in the nest he did much foraging on the surface of the pool, swimming about on the water in the manner of a phalarope. From a perching stick, which I had placed for his convenience, on rare occasions he was seen to dive and to swim under water, but at no time was he seen to use his wings. The purpose of these dives I never learned. The bird never went to the bottom or did it appear to forage under water.

If an ouzel does not use its wings as an aid to progress while swimming on the surface of the water why should it be necessary, or even to its advantage, to use its wings while swimming under water?

The ouzel when swimming kicks its feet rapidly and alternately. When foraging under water it shows a preference for strong currents. The preference for swift water is probably due to the fact that the bird has learned to take advantage of the pressure afforded by the current to hold its body down.

Even when fishing in a shallow riffle the ouzel always heads up-stream and works against the current. After working up-stream for some distance the ouzel may unloosen its toe-hold and float down stream on the current to shallow water where it can regain its toe-hold without diving and then once more tread upward, looking like some sort of huge water-beetle. This behavior might be likened to the foraging habit of the creeper, which bird slowly works up a tree trunk and then drops down to start over.

In swimming, open wings against the current would seemingly be more of a detriment than an advantage. Many times in shallow water I have seen an ouzel walking along the bottom of the stream against the current with the water racing over its back. The stream-lined body of the ouzel offered little resistance and such pressure of current as there was helped to hold the bird to the floor of the stream. Headed into the current, with feet firmly planted and head held down the body could be held at the proper angle to keep the ouzel on the bottom. In strong current an ouzel could stand quite still, but in a slight current the ouzel would be forced to move up-stream to produce the necessary current pressure to hold its body down.

Coming up in swift water the ouzel fairly pops to the surface and often takes off with such speed as to give the impression of having taken the first wing strokes while still under water.

A near approach to flying underwater came to my attention while I was watching an ouzel at the top of Lower Yosemite Fall. The bird was foraging on the very brink and was inadvertently swept over the fall. The ouzel dropped perhaps thirty feet in the swirl of mist, came out flying and returned to its former position. The ouzel appeared not the least disturbed by what had seemed to me a perilous adventure.

Does any bird use its wings both for swimming and for flying?—CHARLES W. MICHAEL, *Yosemite, California, November 20, 1937.*

Cowbirds in Western Nevada.—On May 30, 1938, I observed five cowbirds (*Molothrus ater artemisiae*), three males and two females, in a field on the old road to Verdi, about two miles west of the Reno (Nevada) city limits. They were watched with an 8×30 glass at a distance of fifty feet, for twenty minutes. Two males were conducting a sort of dance, with feathers ruffed at nape, in apparent courtship of one of the females. Had identification by the brown head of the males and the short stout bills not already been made, it would have been simple when a pair of Brewer Blackbirds alighted to feed with them.

This appears to be an unusual record for western Nevada. Jean Linsdale in "The Birds of Nevada" (Pac. Coast Avif. No. 23, 1936, p. 116) shows only one record for Washoe County, that of an adult male obtained by Ridgway at the Truckee reservation, on June 2, 1868.—DRYDEN KUSER, *Reno, Nevada, June 16, 1938.*

Hutton Vireo with Young in February.—On February 26, 1938, while studying birds in the hills back of Whittier, California, I was surprised to see a Hutton Vireo (*Vireo huttoni huttoni*) approaching a nest. This was situated on the extreme end of an oak limb, pensiled, and in an exposed position. It was approximately 20 feet from the ground. The nesting tree was in the center of a group of oaks on a hill side.

The nest was of the usual Hutton Vireo type, made of fine fibers covered with green moss and lined with fine grasses. Unable to reach the nest, which I supposed to be ready for eggs, I climbed a nearby oak and with the aid of field glasses obtained a good look at the nest and its occupants, namely, four baby vireos, which were probably a day or two old.

On March 14, I returned to the nest, to find it empty and the four young birds in a nearby elderberry tree. I caught one of them and it perched on my hand for some time. The parents were anxious as to its well-being and came very close to me. The young bird finally heeded their frantic calls and flew back into the tree. At this time an industrious pair of Green-backed Goldfinches was removing the nesting material from the vireo's nest and placing it in their own nest in a nearby tree. —E. M. HALL, *Whittier, California, June 9, 1938.*

Harris Sparrow at Buena Park, California.—In the late afternoon of April 23, 1938, a Harris Sparrow (*Zonotrichia querula*) was noticed in company of a small flock of Gambel Sparrows (*Zonotrichia leucophrys gambelii*) that were coming to the feed trays in our back yard. During the next four days it was observed at close range a number of times and it was last seen about 5:00 p.m., April 27. The last Gambel for the season was seen on April 28.—JOHN MCB. ROBERTSON, *Buena Park, California, May 30, 1938.*

NOTES AND NEWS

Readers of the *Condor* familiar with John L. Ridgway's ability as an illustrator will be glad to know of his recent book on "Scientific Illustration" (Stanford University Press, 1938, xiv +173 pp., 22 pls., 23 figs. in text). This is a manual which begins with the simplest fundamentals of the subject and treats ultimately the special problems and customs in many separate fields of science. To anyone, whether ornithologist or not, who contemplates publishing in scientific journals, this volume will give points of good advice. The plates illustrating lighting effects, arrangement of figures, and types of reproduction are excellent examples of the principles discussed.—A. H. M.

The late Junius Henderson, known so pleasantly to many Cooper Club members, and an extensive contributor to the *Condor* from 1906 to 1927, is accorded fitting remembrance in a special number of the *University of Colorado Studies* (vol. 25, no. 2, March, 1938, pp. 117-160; Boulder, Colorado, price $1.00). His was a truly broad scientific interest. He worked untiringly in geology, paleontology, conchology, and ornithology; he published importantly in all these fields, as well as, in a lesser way, in mammalogy and ethnology. Aside from the absorbingly interesting biographical portion of the present memorial, a permanently useful feature is the complete bibliography, enabling a student in any one of the several fields, quickly to locate whatever Henderson may have written within its scope. At the time of his death, November 4, 1937, Henderson was Professor Emeritus in the University of Colorado. Appropriately, four of his