

may show that in certain areas this hazard is serious enough to warrant consideration of preventive measures.—A. E. BORELL, *Soil Conservation Service, Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 19, 1938.*

**Remarks on Alaskan Savannah Sparrows.**—In the recent revision of the Savannah sparrows by Peters and Griscom (Bull. Mus. Comp. Zool., vol. 80, 1938, pp. 445–478), the name *Passerculus sandwichensis crassus* is given (p. 459) to a medium-sized, stout-billed bird, the breeding range of which is said (p. 460) to be “Islands in the Alexander Archipelago from Chichagof Island to Prince of Wales Island; also on the adjacent mainland at the Chickamin River.”

An examination of southeastern Alaskan specimens collected by the writer demonstrates that, while there are numerous examples of migrants that answer the description of *crassus*, six breeding birds, three males and three females (L. A. Mus., nos. 18627–18632), from Petersburg, Mitkof Island, taken between June 27 and July 1, 1936, are clearly not of that form, their bills being much too slender. These specimens were submitted to Mr. Griscom and examined by him and Mr. Peters, both of whom agree that they are not examples of *crassus* but of the bird they call *anthinus* (*alaudinus* of the 1931 A.O.U. Check-list). As Petersburg is almost in the center of the breeding range ascribed to *crassus*, it would seem that the limits of this range require redetermination.

While Peters and Griscom list birds taken on Kuiu Island as breeding examples, they do not give dates of capture. Swarth (Univ. Calif. Publ. Zool., vol. 7, 1911, p. 85), referring to specimens taken by the 1909 Alexander Alaska Expedition in this locality May 3, apparently regarded them as migrants, which they undoubtedly were at this early date. However, Swarth does consider specimens taken at Chickamin River, on the mainland, in June, breeding birds, but Peters and Griscom do not mention these as among the materials they examined.

It might be well here to call attention to an error in the range of *Passerculus s. sandwichensis* as given by Peters and Griscom (*op. cit.*, p. 449). This should read: “Not definitely recorded from any of the Aleutians west of Unalaska,” not “east” of that point. In this connection the writer is able to record a slight extension of the range of *sandwichensis*. While on Umnak Island, the next island west of Unalaska, the summer of 1926, the bird was found to be breeding rather commonly. A juvenal (no. 3621, coll. G. W.), still unable to fly, was taken August 18.—G. WILLET, *Los Angeles Museum, Los Angeles, California, January 5, 1939.*

**Two New Bird Records for Utah.**—The names of two species of birds may now be added to the list of those collected in the State of Utah. One male Indigo Bunting, *Passerina cyanea*, in the collection at Dixie College was taken July 11, 1937, at Saint George, Utah, by Floyd Atkin, a student.

May 20, 1938, two boys, Ralph Hafen and the late Richard Klenk, obtained a Least Bittern, *Ixobrychus exilis*, from one of the small marshes near the Rio Virgin at Saint George. The skin is in my personal collection.—ROSS HARDY, *Dixie College, Saint George, Utah, December 20, 1938.*

**Notes on Shorebirds from the San Francisco Bay Region.**—*Steganopus tricolor*. Wilson Phalarope. Approximately two miles northeast of the Mackay Radio towers near Palo Alto, Santa Clara County, there was a group of large ponds kept at constant level by dikes originally erected by a salt company. These ponds were rather shallow with large areas covered by an inch or less of water. On July 30, 1937, when the writer was with E. W. Martin, numbers of Wilson Phalarope were noted, and during the following two weeks, until August 14, they were seen practically every day. Some days their numbers were estimated at five or six hundred, wading for the most part in the shallow portions of the ponds. A few could sometimes be seen swimming with the Northern Phalaropes in the deeper parts of the pools. There were large numbers of Western Sandpipers feeding along the edges of the water, and the Wilson Phalaropes were scattered among them. Because of their seemingly infrequent occurrence in the Bay region, some were collected and one of these, a male, is now number 74515, Mus. Vert. Zool. It might be added that these ponds have been drained by a new system of water channels, and this year no Wilson Phalaropes were seen.

*Numenius hudsonicus*. Hudsonian Curlew. Observed on the mud flats east of the Mackay tower near Palo Alto, until June 4, 1937, which appears to be a late record (see Grinnell and Wythe, Pac. Coast Avif. no. 18, 1927, p. 71). One, a female, obtained June 2, 1937, is in my collection.

*Limosa fedoa*. Marbled Godwit. Noted until June 5, 1937, near Palo Alto, on which date a female was collected.

*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus inornatus*. Western Willet. Seen on the mud flats near Palo Alto until June 5, 1937, on which date several were collected, which seems to be a late record (Grinnell and Wythe, *op. cit.*, p. 70).

*Heteroscelus incamus*. Wandering Tattler. An early record for the Bay region (Grinnell and Wythe, *loc. cit.*) was obtained when a Wandering Tattler (female number 170) was collected at Pescadero Point, San Mateo County, on April 29, 1938. Six Tattlers were observed that day in a two-mile stretch south of Pescadero Point.

*Totanus flavipes*. Lesser Yellow-legs. Three were seen July 23, 1938, on a sand bar in the Gualala River, Mendocino County, California, about two miles up from the mouth. The identification has been checked by Mr. Frederick Test from one collected July 24 (male, number 317).—WALTER F. NICHOLS, Pasadena, California, January 3, 1939.

**Purple Finches Feeding on Cotoneaster Berries.**—About mid-morning of January 21, 1939, a group of California Purple Finches (*Carpodacus purpureus californicus*), including at least four males and one female, was seen apparently feeding on the berries of the silverleaf cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster parnosa*). This is the form which often grows into a slender tree, with graceful, drooping branches. The light red, dull surfaced berries remain on the tree all through the fall and winter. In contrast with the robins' swallowing of whole berries, the finches' method was to bite off the top or side of a berry and eat the contents "on the half-shell." When a berry did come off the stem, a finch seemed at a loss what to do with it, fumbling it in the beak and soon letting it drop. Clicking of beaks suggested cracking of seeds, and skins and pulp were lavishly wasted.

Later examination of the berries disclosed a single, fairly large, roundish, white seed in the center. Little berry cups from which the seed had been neatly removed were conspicuous on the twigs. It is interesting that birds which are normally seed-eating should seek out this relatively abundant hidden supply, available to them at a time of year when other seeds are scarce.—FRANCES CARTER, Berkeley, California, January 22, 1939.

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## NOTES AND NEWS

At a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Cooper Ornithological Club held at Los Angeles January 20, 1939, it was unanimously voted to postpone the next Annual Meeting of the Club until 1940, the exact date to be set at a later meeting of the Board. The reason for this action was that a consensus of opinion of leading members of both divisions of the Club supports the advisability of concentration of the efforts of the Club on the success of the Annual Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union, to be held in the San Francisco Bay region in June of this year.—HOWARD ROBERTSON, *President*; GEORGE WILLETT, *Secretary*.

The Fifty-seventh Annual Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union is to be held in the San Francisco Bay region June 19 to 23. Headquarters will be at the University of California, in Berkeley, where the business sessions on June 19 and scientific sessions on June 20 and 21 will be held. On June 22 the scientific program will be continued at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Members of the Union are reminded that nominations for Fellows and Members, to be presented at the business sessions, must be sent to the secretary, Dr. Lawrence E. Hicks, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, three months in advance, that is, by March 19. The official hotel selected for the meeting is the Durant, in Berkeley, which is close

to the University campus. Reduced fares from the East have been announced by railway companies to facilitate travel to the San Francisco World Fair this summer. Local members of the Cooper Ornithological Club warmly urge all who can to attend the meeting of the Union, and we wish especially to aid in arrangements for field trips so that on June 23 and 24 all persons wishing to see something of Pacific coast bird life may have the best of opportunities.—A. H. M.

On February 4, 1939, the Cooper Ornithological Club lost, by death, one of its most accomplished out-of-doors bird-watchers, Ernest I. Dyer, of Piedmont, California. For some six years past, Dyer had occupied himself most of the hours of every day, on his woodsy place at 40 Selborne Drive, keeping "log" of the behavior of his avian associates; his observations were recorded hour by hour, typewritten by himself with a trained engineer's precision and illustrated by drawings and photographs. These records had come to comprise many manuscript volumes; but Dyer was reluctant to publish—his pleasure was gained in watching and recording. He was, as it happened, prevailed upon only recently to write up an experience of his with a nesting Allen Hummingbird, and the article appears in this issue of the Condor (p. 62). It demonstrates his technique in observing. He assumed the rôle of the birds' *companion*; he never caught, banded, or even